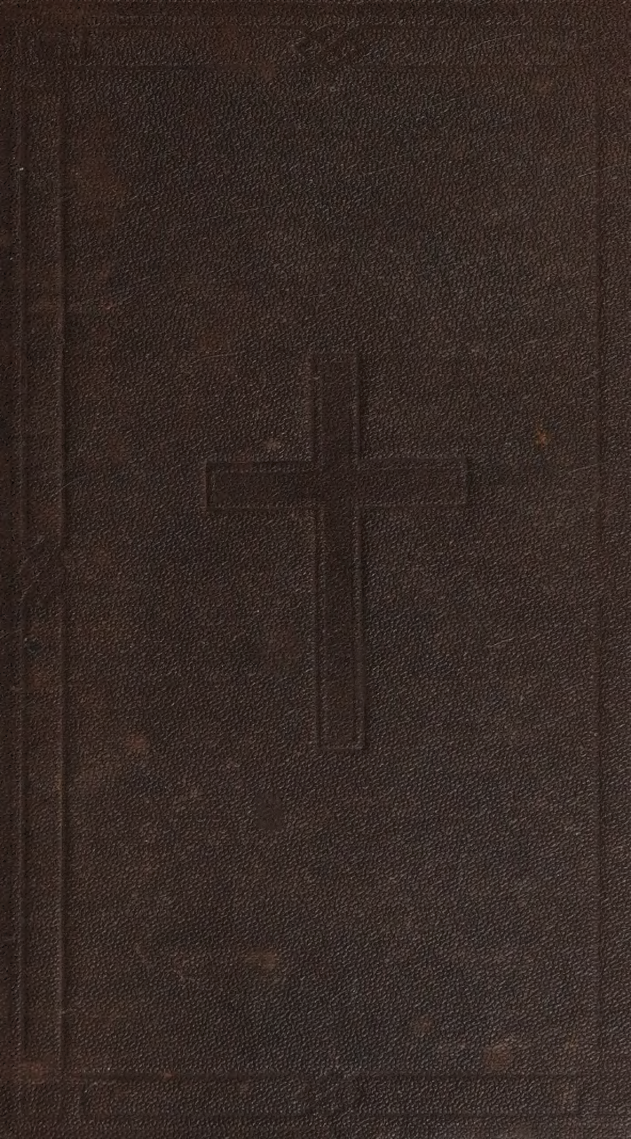

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THE

SUFFERINGS OF JESUS.

BY

CATHERINE EMMERICH.

TRANSLATED BY

A SISTER OF MERCY.

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE large work containing the visions of Catharine Emmerich, originally written in German, translated into French, and finally rendered into English by the translator, has been reduced to its present size under the conviction that it may be thus made more desirable as a book of meditation. The frequent repetitions, and often irrelevant matter, introduced into the original, interfere with the effect which must be infallibly produced by a condensation of the beautiful thoughts and thrilling details of that stupendous tragedy, enacted on this earth of ours by a God, for the love of his creature man—a love so astounding as almost to surpass credibility, obliging us at times to call to our aid the unerring lights of revelation to insure the truth

of our convictions. The descriptions, although very vivid, are perfectly natural, and the translator has endeavored to adhere as closely as possible to the simplicity of the original. Catharine was favored with these visions (fruits of her contemplative love of Jesus) in her meditations during the season of Lent. They were related without art, and written according to her own recital, which was made in obedience to an enlightened director. Surely they cannot be meditated upon without inducing the ardent wish that, if our love and sorrow cannot be so intense as to merit for us, as for Catharine, the stigmata upon our sinful bodies, we may at least receive their impress so deeply upon our insensible hearts as to cause each soul to cry out from its very depths, "Oh! may every breath I draw be a breath of love for Him who died of love for me—Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

SKETCH OF THE LIFE

OF

CATHARINE EMMERICH.

Ann Catharine Emmerich was the daughter of poor and pious peasants. She was born in a little village in the Diocese of Munster, on the 8th of July, 1774. It is said that, when a child, her angel-guardian frequently appeared to her in the form of an infant. From her childhood she was taught sacred history in different visions, and the Mother of God appeared to her in a meadow, as a beautiful woman, full of sweetness and majesty, holding the divine child in her arms, and assured her of her tender affection and protection.

In childish simplicity she would relate what she had seen, which was to her so clear, so beautiful, and so palpable, that she believed it was usual for all Christian children to see the same, only that they were too discreet and well-bred to speak of it, and she would often remain silent, in order to resemble

them. When a priest passed with the Blessed Sacrament, even at a great distance from her cabin, or from the place where she was tending her flock, Catharine felt herself drawn towards him, and running, fell upon her knees and adored her Lord.

Such was her delicacy of conscience that the smallest sin would cause her affliction so great as to produce sickness. The many rare favors she received from God did not prevent her from engaging in the hard toil common to the young peasants of her country, and from her earliest years until her death she consoled the sick, always taking particular care of those who had wounds and ulcers.

Her interior school was one of mortification and suffering. She would only allow herself the sleep and nourishment which was absolutely necessary, passing several hours of the night in prayer, and sleeping on the ground, on boards in the form of a cross. She was accustomed to say that every useless indulgence was sinful, and that in retrenching something of this kind from the exterior senses, it was returned a hundred-fold in the interior life, as pruning renders vines and fruit-trees more fertile.

About her 24th year, Catharine received a favor similar to that of St. Catharine of Sienna. Our

Saviour appeared to her, in the form of a youth, resplendent with light, and presented to her two crowns—one of flowers, the other of thorns. She chose the crown of thorns, and as he placed it on her head, she pressed it strongly down.

She suffered, at times, great pain in her head, and the author of a sketch of her life declares that he has seen blood flow from her forehead in sufficient quantity to soak the linen about her neck. Her desire was great to devote herself to God in Religion, but continued opposition on the part of her family prevented her doing so, until the 13th Nov., 1802, when she took the habit of a novice, in the Convent of the Augustines, at Dulmen, and, after many severe trials, she made her solemn vows at the age of 29, 13th Nov., 1803.

Catherine had much to suffer from those around her, and from her many corporal maladies. She said, upon this subject: "Repose in suffering has always appeared to me the most desirable state for man on earth. Angels themselves would envy it, if envy were not an imperfection; but suffering, to be profitable, should be borne patiently, and with gratitude also, not only for its consolations, but for the disagreeable circumstances which may attend it, such as

remedies misapplied, or whatever else may be added to the cross, to make it heavier." Thus she gave herself entirely to her celestial spouse, that his will might be accomplished in her. It pleased her divine Master to mark her virginal body with his cross and the stigmata of his crucifixion.

Catharine, from childhood, had prayed her Saviour Jesus to impress so strongly upon her heart his sacred cross, that she should never be forgetful of his love for man; but she thought not of an exterior sign. She received the stigmata in the year 1812—she was in her little cell, very ill, and lying upon her bed with her arms extended in an ecstasy —she was meditating upon the sufferings of Jesus, and asked to suffer with him—she saw a light descending towards her, and distinguished within it the resplendent form of her crucified Lord, his wounds like five bright furnaces, sending forth rays of light. Her heart was overwhelmed with sorrow and joy at the sight of these holy wounds, and her desire to suffer with him became intense. Then from the hands, feet, and side of the apparition darted forth triple rays of a bloody-red hue, terminating in the form of arrows, and, approaching her, pierced her hands, her feet, and her side. The

rays from the side of Jesus terminated like a lance. As soon as she was struck, drops of blood issued from the wounded parts. Catharine remained for a long time insensible, and when she recovered she did not know who had lowered her extended hands, and saw with astonishment blood flowing from the palms of her hands, and felt most violent pains in her feet and in her side. Many persons of distinction, the Count de Stolberg, the Prince Galitzin, &c., visited her and witnessed the blood flowing abundantly from the stigmata.

Some weeks later, making the same prayer, that she might suffer with her divine Spouse, she fell into an ecstasy and saw the same apparition presenting to her a small cross. She ardently seized it, and pressing it strongly against her breast, she returned it. She says that the cross was white and soft like wax.

Catharine feeling afterwards an acute pain in her breast, she perceived there the appearance of a cross, three inches in length, which seemed to adhere to the bone, being traced in red outside of the skin. This cross bled on every Wednesday, so that the impression of it could be taken on paper; and on Friday the cross became as red as fire.

The stigmata caused her inexpressible pain until her death. She did not allow herself to dwell upon the graces of which they were the certain evidence, but turned this favor to the increase of her humility, considering it as a heavy cross laid upon her on account of her sins, in order that her body might preach "Christ crucified." Oftentimes, when overwhelmed by the weight of her sufferings and trials, Catharine supplicated God to deliver her from them, she would appear upon the very verge of the tomb; but each time she would say, "Lord, not my will but yours: if my prayers and my sufferings are useful, let me live a thousand years; but sooner let me die than offend you." Our Lord would then command her to live, and she would raise herself up, burdened with her cross, and continued to carry it after her Saviour, until her blessed soul was released from her suffering body.

Catharine's death took place on the 9th of February, 1829.

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THE

SUFFERINGS OF JESUS.

CHAPTER I.

THE PASCHAL SUPPER.

JESUS, with his disciples, celebrated the Paschal Supper in the Cenacle. The Lord sat alone with his twelve apostles in the great hall. The immolation of the lamb destined for the sacrifice was singularly touching, and took place in the vestibule of the Cenacle. The apostles and disciples sang there the 118th Psalm, and after they had concluded, Jesus spoke to them of the new epoch then commencing, and told them that the sacrifice of Moses, and the figure of the paschal lamb, were in their accomplishment, and on this account the lamb must be immolated as was formerly done in Egypt, for they were

really going out of the house of bondage. The vases and necessary instruments being then brought to the Lord, they led to him a little lamb (sent by the Holy Virgin), ornamented with a crown, and bearing on its back a board, which was bound round its middle with cords. This recalled to me Jesus fastened to the pillar, and his flagellation. The son of Simeon held the head of the lamb, whilst Jesus pierced it in the neck with a knife, giving it to Simeon to kill it. The Saviour seemed to feel great repugnance to wound the lamb; turning aside his head, he did it quickly and very gravely. The blood was gathered into a basin, and Jesus, going to the hall door, with a branch of hyssop dipped in the blood, marked its two posts and the lock, and placed above the door the branch moistened with blood. The Lord then continued his instruction, telling them that the exterminating angel had passed out, that they might worship in spirit and in truth, in this place, when he, the true Paschal Lamb, should be sacrificed; that a new

period, with a new sacrifice, was in its commencement, which would continue until the end of the world. He then went to the lower part of the hall, where had stood formerly the ark of the covenant. There was fire on the hearth, and Jesus poured the blood upon the hearth, consecrating it as an altar. The rest of the blood and fat was thrown under the altar. The Lord, followed by his apostles, then made the tour of the Cenacle, singing hymns, and consecrating it as a new temple. In the mean while, the son of Simeon had completed his preparation of the lamb. It was put upon a stake, the fore legs crossed and fastened to a piece of wood transversely placed; the hind legs were extended the length of the stake, and it was thus placed in the oven. The lamb resembled Jesus upon the cross. The Lord then said further to his apostles, that the lamb was only a figure—that he himself, the true Paschal Lamb, would be sacrificed on the morrow. The time was now come; the table was prepared, and each guest put on his garments—a trav-

elling dress, consisting of a white robe (like an under garment), a cloak, short behind and longer before, with large sleeves looped up. They changed their shoes, and, with staves in their hands, they advanced two by two to the table; remaining standing in their places, they leaned upon their staves, with their hands upraised. The table was narrow, and in the form of a horse-shoe. At the right of Jesus were John, James the Greater, and James the Less; at the foot of the table, Bartholomew; on the other side, Thomas and Judas Iscariot; on the left of Jesus were Peter, Andrew, Thaddeus, Simon, Matthew, and Philip. The paschal lamb was placed in the middle of the table, the head resting on the fore feet, in the form of a cross; the hind feet were extended. The borders of the dish were covered with garlic. At the side was placed a dish of roast meat of the pasch; the opposite one contained green vegetables; and a second dish, with bitter aromatic herbs, was placed near it. Before Jesus were placed two other dishes—one with herbs, and the other

holding sauce of a brown color. Each guest had a round loaf, in the form of a plate, and the knives used were of ivory. After the prayer was finished, the master of the house placed before Jesus the knife to carve the lamb; he likewise placed a cup of wine before the Lord, and filled six cups—one for every two of the apostles. Jesus blessed the wine, and drank it; the apostles did the same. The Lord cut the lamb, and each guest presented his bread in turn to receive a portion. They ate very quickly, separating the flesh from the bone with their ivory knives. The bones were then burned. They ate also hastily the garlic and green herbs dipped in the sauce. They remained standing, leaning a little upon the back of the seats. Jesus broke one of the unleavened loaves, taking a piece himself, and distributing the rest. Another cup of wine was brought to Jesus, but he would not drink it. "Take it," he said to his apostles, "and divide it between you—I shall drink no more wine until the kingdom of God shall come." When they had drank,

they sang a hymn. Then Jesus prayed and taught, after which they washed their hands and seated themselves. In the beginning Jesus discoursed very affectionately with his apostles; then he became serious and melancholy. "One of you will betray me," he said—"one of you whose hand is with me at the table." Jesus served the lettuce, of which there was but one dish, for those on his side of the table, and he charged Judas, who was nearly opposite to him, to distribute it on the other side. When Jesus spoke of a traitor, the apostles were frightened, as he did not clearly designate Judas when speaking of one who was to put his hand in the same dish with him, this being a common expression to indicate the most intimate and friendly intercourse. He wished, however, to warn Judas, who really put his hand in the same plate with the Saviour when helping the lettuce. Jesus said further, "The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom he shall be betrayed: it were better for him if he had not been born." The

apostles were all troubled, and asked him in turn, "Is it I, Lord?" Peter leaned behind him towards John, and made him a sign to ask who it was; for, having been often reproached by Jesus, he trembled lest he was the one meant. John was at the right of Jesus, and as all of them leaned upon the left arm, eating with the right hand, his head was so near the Lord that he leaned it down upon the breast of Jesus, and said, "Lord, who is it?" John seemed to receive an intimation who it was, although I did not see Jesus speak, except when he said, "It is he to whom I shall give the morsel I dip in the dish." Jesus dipped the bread into the sauce, surrounding it with lettuce, and presented it affectionately to Judas, who asked also, "Lord, is it I?" Jesus looked at him with love, and replied in general terms. The Lord gave this sign of confidence and friendship to Judas with cordial affection, to warn him, without denouncing him to the rest of the apostles. The heart of Judas was only filled by it with rage. I did not see John

tell Peter what he had heard from Jesus, but he quieted him by a look.

CHAPTER II.

THE WASHING OF THE FEET.

Jesus and his twelve apostles arising from table arranged their garments, as was the custom, to make a solemn prayer. The master of the house entered with two servants to clear the table. The Lord begged him to have water brought into the vestibule, and he withdrew, with his servants. Jesus, standing in the midst of the apostles, spoke to them for some time, with great solemnity. I cannot recall the whole of his discourse, but I remember he spoke to them of his kingdom, of his return to his Father, and of what he would leave them when he quitted them. He taught also of penance, confession of sins, of repentance and justification. I understood that this instruction was relative to the washing

of feet; and I saw that all acknowledged their sins and repented of them, except Judas. When Jesus had finished, he sent John and James the Less into the vestibule for water; and telling his apostles to arrange their seats in a semicircle, he went himself into the vestibule and girded himself with a linen napkin During this time the apostles exchanged some words with each other, speculating as to who would be the greatest among them; the Lord having expressly announced to them that he was about quitting them, and that his kingdom was near. The opinion was current among them that he had a hidden meaning in what he said, and that an earthly triumph would burst forth at the last moment. Jesus, in the vestibule, made John take a basin and James a pitcher of water, and followed them into the hall, where the master of the house had already placed an empty basin. Jesus, entering in the humblest manner, reproached his apostles, in a few words, for the discussion held amongst them; telling them that he was himself their servant, for he would wash their feet,

and made them sit down in the same order as at table. Jesus went from one to the other, pouring water upon their feet and wiping them with the linen with which he was girded. The manner of the Lord was deeply touching and affectionate, whilst he fulfilled these humble functions. When he came to Peter, this apostle, through humility, wished to prevent him, saying, "What, Lord, wilt thou wash my feet?" The Lord replied, "Thou knowest not now what I do, but thou wilt know it hereafter." It seemed to me, he added in an under-tone, "Simon, thou hast merited to learn from my Father who I am, whence I came, and where I go. Thou alone hast confessed me: therefore will I build upon thee my Church, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against it. My Spirit shall rest with thy successors unto the very end of the world." Jesus showing him to the rest of the apostles, told them, that when he would be no longer with them, Peter should supply his place. Peter said to him, "Lord, you shall never wash my feet." Jesus replied,

"If I wash thee not, thou shalt have no part with me." Then Peter said, "Lord, wash not only my feet, but also my hands and my head." Jesus replied, "He who is already washed, has no need of washing his feet, he is entirely pure: ye are pure, but not all" (designating Judas by these words). He spoke of the washing of feet as a purification of daily faults. The feet coming constantly in contact with earth, become soiled, if vigilance is wanting.

CHAPTER III.

INSTITUTION OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

By the orders of the Lord the master of the house had laid the table anew, which he had partially cleared; and having arranged it in the middle of the hall, he placed upon it an urn full of water and another filled with wine. Peter and John went to the hearth of the paschal lamb, to take the chalice which

was placed there on a case. They brought it between them as if carrying a tabernacle, and placed it before Jesus: there was also near the chalice an oval plate, with three unleavened bread-cakes, white and thin. The bread was placed upon a linen cloth, near the half loaf which had been laid aside by Jesus during the paschal supper. It was a custom of the earliest times to partake of bread and wine, and to drink from the same chalice at the end of a repast, as a sign of fraternity and love, when giving a welcome, or bidding an adieu. Jesus was seated between Peter and John, the doors were closed, and all was done with mysterious solemnity. When the chalice was drawn from its case, Jesus prayed and explained to his apostles the supper and its ceremonies. Then taking a piece of white linen which covered the chalice, he drew from underneath the chalice a round plate, and laid upon it the unleavened bread. He took from the chalice a smaller vase which was within it, and placed six little glasses around it. Jesus then blessed the bread,

elevating with both his hands the paten on which it lay, and raising his eyes, prayed and offered it; and placing anew the paten on the table, he covered it. Then taking the chalice, Jesus made Peter pour wine into it, and John poured water which had been previously blest; after which he blessed the chalice, and praying, elevated it as an offering, and replaced it on the table. John and Peter poured water upon his hands, holding underneath, the plate on which the unleavened bread had been laid; and Jesus taking, with a spoon, a little of the water which had been poured upon his own hands, poured it upon theirs: then the vase was passed round the table, and all washed their hands in it. Jesus evinced the deepest feeling, and told them that he was about giving them all he had, that is to say, *himself.* He seemed melting with love, and became transparent, like a luminous shade. He broke the bread into several pieces and heaped it upon the paten; and taking a morsel of the first piece, he let it fall into the chalice. He then prayed and

taught further: his words seemed to come from his mouth like fire and light, and entered into all the apostles, except Judas. Jesus took the paten with the pieces of bread, and said, "Take and eat, this is my body which is given for you." He extended his right hand as if for a blessing; and as he did so, a splendor seemed to flash from him, and the bread entered the mouths of the apostles as a brilliant body. I saw them all penetrated with glory. Judas alone remained in darkness. The Lord presented the bread first to Peter, then to John, and afterwards made a sign to Judas to approach: he was the third to whom he presented the Blessed Sacrament, but it seemed as if the words of the Saviour returned back from the mouth of the traitor to his own. Jesus then said to him, "What thou doest, do quickly." Pronouncing the words of consecration, Jesus elevated the chalice to the height of his face. Whilst doing so he was transfigured, and seemed to pass entirely into what he gave them. He made Peter and John drink from

the chalice which he held in his hands, and replaced it on the table. John poured the sacred blood from the chalice into the little vases, and Peter presented it to the apostles, two drinking out of one cup. I believe Judas took part in the chalice: he did not, however, return to his seat, but left the Cenacle immediately. The Lord poured into the smaller vase, of which I have already spoken, the remains of the precious blood left in the bottom of the chalice; and then placing his fingers above the chalice he made Peter and John pour water into it, and gave them again to drink: he then distributed the remainder in the little cups to the apostles. Jesus wiped the chalice, and placed it in the case. All that he did during the institution of the Blessed Eucharist, was most solemn, his every movement being filled with majesty.

CHAPTER IV.

JESUS ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

When Jesus, after the institution of the Blessed Sacrament, quitted the Cenacle, his soul began to be sad, and his sorrow continued to increase. He conducted the eleven through a by-path to the valley of Josaphat, telling them, "You will all be scandalized in me this night, for it is written, I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; but when I shall have risen I will precede you into Galilee." The apostles, still preserving a part of the enthusiasm produced by the reception of the Blessed Sacrament, and by the solemn and touching discourse made to them by Jesus, pressed around him, earnestly protesting their love, and promising that they never would abandon him; but Jesus continuing to speak in the same strain, Peter said, "Though all should be scandal-

ized in thee, Lord, I never will be." Jesus, turning to him, said, "Peter, before the cock crows twice, thou wilt deny me thrice;" but Peter insisted still further, saying, "Though I should die with thee, Lord, I would not deny thee." So said all the other apostles. They traversed the torrent of Cedron to Gethsemani, a garden in which were grot toes, terraces, and numerous olive-trees. In the wildest part of the garden, Jesus retired to pray. It was about nine o'clock when he came to Gethsemani with his apostles. The earth was dark, but the rising moon was beginning to brighten it with her heavenly light. Jesus was very sad, and telling eight of those who accompanied him to remain in the garden, he took with him Peter, James. and John, and entered the Garden of Olives. He then became inexpressibly sorrowful, for the time of trial approached. John asked him how it was that he, who had always consoled them, could be himself so overwhelmed. "My soul is sorrowful, even unto death," he replied; "but stay here and watch with me,

and pray that ye enter not into temptation." Jesus then withdrew into the grotto. Vines and plants formed a trellis-work at its entrance, so as to screen him from their view. Having entered there, his sorrow and anguish redoubled, and he trembled like a man seeking shelter from a sudden storm. Alas! this narrow cavern seemed to inclose the horrible spectacle of all the sins committed since the fall of Adam, and that of their chastisement, until the end of the world. It would seem as if Jesus, in delivering himself up to divine justice in satisfaction for the sins of the world, caused his divinity in some manner to re-enter into the bosom of the Holy Trinity, concentrating himself in his pure, loving, and innocent humanity; and armed alone with his ineffable love, he devoted it to suffering and to anguish. The Lord of heaven and earth writhed like a crushed worm under the pressure of agonizing sorrow.

CHAPTER V.

CONTINUATION OF THE AGONY OF JESUS.

WHEN beginning to pray, Jesus was somewhat calm; but later, his soul, affrighted at the aspect of the innumerable crimes of men, and of their ingratitude towards him, became seized with so violent an agony that he cried out, trembling and shuddering, "My Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from me. My Father, to you all things are possible: take from me this chalice." Then, as if recollecting himself, he added, "Nevertheless, let your will be done, not mine." His will and that of his Father were one, but delivered by his love to the weakness of humanity, he trembled at the sight of death. All the sins and ingratitude of man, the horrors of death, the terror which he felt at the aspect of his expiatory sufferings, pressed upon him and assailed him under the forms of hideous spec-

tres; he fell on one side and then on the other, and clasped his sacred hands, while the sweat burst from him. He arose: his trembling limbs were scarcely able to support him. He was faint, his lips livid, his hair dishevelled, and he could hardly be recognized. Almost falling at each step, he dragged himself towards his three apostles and found them sleeping, overcome with fatigue, anxiety, and sorrow. Jesus sought them like a man whom, in the deepest anguish, terror impels towards his friends, and as a good shepherd, who, warned of approaching danger, comes to visit his sheep; for he was aware that these were in sorrow and temptation, assailed by terrible visions. When the Saviour found them sleeping, he clasped his hands and threw himself on the ground near them, exclaiming, "Simon, are you sleeping?" They awoke, rose up, and he added, "Could you not watch one hour with me?" When the apostles saw him fainting, pale, and trembling, when they heard his changed and scarcely audible voice, they would not have

recognized their Lord had they not seen the well-known light surrounding him. John said to him, "Master, what has befallen you? Shall I call the other apostles, or shall we fly?" Jesus replied, "Call not the eight—they might be scandalized to see me thus, and would fall into temptation so as to doubt me; but ye, who have witnessed the transfiguration of the Son of Man, may witness likewise his darkness and sorrow; but watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation, for the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." He wished thus to engage them to perseverance, and to announce to them the combat of his human nature against death, and the cause of this weakness. Jesus remained about a quarter of an hour with his apostles, and returned to the grotto; there, prostrating himself on his face, with his arms extended, he prayed to his heavenly Father. Then was displayed before him all the suffering due to the expiation of sin, showing to him, in the satisfaction that was to be made to divine justice, a suffering of body and soul compre-

hending all the pains due to the concupiscence of the whole human race. The debt of human nature was to be paid by the only humanity exempt from sin—that of the Son of God.

CHAPTER VI.

CONTINUATION OF THE AGONY.

No tongue could express the fright and sorrow which overwhelmed the soul of Jesus at the sight of these terrible expiations. The effect produced by this vision was a sweat of blood bursting forth from all the pores of his adorable body; there was a conflict, as it were, between the mercy and justice of God, and the love which sacrificed itself. When the Redeemer, on the Mount of Olives, wished to experience and to overcome the violent repugnance of human nature to sorrow and to death (which constitutes a part of all human suffering), the tempter was permitted to make him feel what every soul must

experience, when wishing to sacrifice itself for a holy cause; but Jesus came off victorious from this combat, by his complete abandonment to the will of his heavenly Father. A new circle of fearful visions then presented themselves to him; and joined to these, the doubt and disquietude, often preceding a sacrifice in the devoted soul, were forcibly aroused in the soul of the Saviour. He asked himself this dreadful question, Of what use is this sacrifice, what will it avail? Hideous images of the heartlessness of man, for whose sake he had assumed the debt due to divine justice, passed before him with fearful impetuosity: in these were included every species of profanation offered to his love, in the adorable sacrament of the altar,—negligence, irreverence, even contempt and frightful sacrilege. Impurity and carelessness, extending also to faithful souls, who allow uncleanness to defile the tabernacle of their heart when Jesus enters it, offer the same indignity to their Saviour, as if they placed him in a defiled tabernacle on the altar.

The sins and enormities of each individual soul were present before him, for each one he agonized. The conflict was fearful. In his distress, Jesus looked around him as if seeking help, and seemed to call the heavens, the earth, and stars to witness his distress. Several times he cried out, "Father, if this chalice cannot be taken away from me, thy will be done." The blood rolled in large drops from his face, his hair and beard were matted with it and disordered; he arose and fled, as it were, from the grotto towards his apostles, but his movements were like a man covered with wounds and bending under a heavy burden, causing him to stagger at every step. When he came to his apostles, they were not sleeping as at first, but their heads were covered and bent upon their knees, as many pray in sorrow; they were overpowered by drowsiness, caused by sadness and fatigue. Jesus, trembling and groaning, approached them, and they aroused; but when he stood before them, the light of the moon reflected on his pale and bloody

face, and showing his disordered hair, their weary eyes could not immediately recognize him, he was so disfigured—they arose and threw their arms around him, lovingly supporting him, whilst he told them that he should die on the morrow; that the next hour he should be apprehended, brought before the tribunals, maltreated, outraged in every way, scourged, and finally delivered up to the most cruel death. He begged them to console his mother, and also Magdalene. At first they did not reply, for they knew not what to say; his looks and words so troubled them, that they even believed him in delirium.

CHAPTER VII.

CONTINUATION OF THE AGONY.

When Jesus wished to return to the grotto, he had not the strength to walk. James and John supported him; and when he had entered, they returned to the apostles. It was about the eleventh hour. Jesus again began to pray. Now an abyss opened before him displaying Limbo, with all the just therein, so ardently expecting his arrival in that lower world; the sight filled his heart with love, and comforted him—his death would open heaven to these captives, and deliver them from the prison in which they languished. The angels presented to him likewise throngs of the future blessed, who, having combated in union with the merits of his Passion, would, through him, be united to his eternal Father. It was a beautiful and consoling vision; he saw salvation and

sanctification flowing in inexhaustible streams from the great source of redemption opened by his death. Apostles, disciples, virgins, martyrs, confessors, with numerous troups of religious—in a word, an entire army of saints passed in review before him, all wearing on their heads triumphal crowns; the flowers adorning them differing in form, color, and perfume in accordance with the sufferings, combats, and victories by which they had won eternal glory,—all the acts of their lives, their merits and their strength, derived only from the merits of Christ their Saviour. The actions and influence of all these saints drawn from one source alone, the Passion of Jesus and its ever-enduring memorial, the great sacrament of the Eucharist. The spectacle was wondrous and singularly touching. Nothing seemed fortuitous in these blessed ones—their works, their martyrdom, their victories, their appearance with their garments, though all so diverse, combined in perfect harmony presented an infinite unity. This unity in diversity was produced by the effulgent rays

of one sun,—by the Passion of the Saviour, of the Word made flesh, who is the life and light of men, "who shines in darkness and the darkness does not comprehend him." This inexpressibly touching vision gave to the soul of Jesus consolation and strength. Ah, he so loved his creatures, that he would have accepted with joy all the sufferings to which he devoted himself for the redemption of one single soul. But these consoling images passed away, and the angels showed him his passion already near; each scene was distinctly presented before him, from the kiss of Judas to the last words upon the cross. The treason of his own apostle, the flight of the rest, the insults before Annas and Caiphas, the denial of Peter, the tribunal of Pilate, the derisions of Herod, the scourg ing at the pillar, the crowning with thorns, his condemnation to death, the carrying of his cross, the crucifixion, the scoffs of the Pharisees, the sorrows of Mary Magdalene and John, the piercing of the lance through his sacred side,—all were before him in their

minutest detail; he accepted them voluntarily, submitting to all for the love of his creature man. At the end of these visions of his Passion, Jesus fell upon his face, as in a death agony; the angels disappeared, and his blood flowed abundantly. The cave was in profound obscurity, when an angel descended to comfort him. Jesus having freely accepted the chalice of suffering and received a new strength, he remained yet some minutes in the grotto, plunged in a profound but tranquil meditation, returning thanks to his Eternal Father: he was yet sad, but naturally recomforted, so as to be able to rejoin his apostles, without faltering in his footsteps, or bending under the weight of his grief: he was pale and weak, but his step was firm and decided. He had wiped his face, and somewhat arranged his beautiful hair, which hung down matted upon his shoulders, wet with his blood. When Jesus reached his disciples they were lying on the ground, as at his first visit to them, and were sleeping. He told them it was no longer time

to sleep, but that they must awake and pray. "Behold," said he, "the hour when the Son of Man will be delivered into the hands of sinners; rise up and let us go hence, the traitor is near, and better would it be that he never had been born." The apostles arose in fright, looking anxiously around them: when they became a little more collected, Peter said warmly, "Master, I will call the others, that we may defend ourselves." But Jesus showed them in the distance, coming through the valley, a troop of armed men approaching with torches, saying, "One of these will betray me:" he spoke calmly, and added, "Let us go forth to meet them; I will deliver myself, without resistance, into the hands of my enemies."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TREASON OF JUDAS.

JUDAS did not expect the result from his treason which followed it. He wished to merit the promised recompense, and to render himself agreeable to the Pharisees, by delivering Jesus to them. The love of money alone possessed his heart; he was weary of the fatiguing, wandering, and persecuted life led by the apostles. He had always expected the temporal kingdom of Jesus, and to enjoy therein a brilliant and lucrative employment; but being disappointed in these expectations, and seeing trouble and persecution increase, he sought to amass a fortune in securing the favor of his Saviour's enemies. After the sacrilegious reception of the Blessed Sacrament, Satan entered into him. The Pharisees asked, "Can we take him?—has he not armed men with him?"

The traitor replied, "Jesus is alone with his eleven apostles; he is discouraged, and the eleven are cowards." Judas gained his point, and received the price of his treason, thirty pieces of silver. He then ran first to the Cenacle, to see if Jesus was there, and not finding him, he told them that the Saviour would certainly be found upon the Mount of Olives, where he often went to pray. The traitor further told them they must take care that he did not escape them—he who had by mysterious means so often hidden himself from them, and rendered himself invisible to those who accompanied him; he advised them to fasten him with a chain, and to make use of certain magic spells to prevent his breaking it. Judas departed with twenty soldiers armed with swords and pikes, and carrying lanterns and torches; these were followed in the distance by four archers. When Jesus and the three apostles saw by the light of the torches this troop of armed men, Peter wished to repel them by force, and said, "Lord, the eight are near by—let us at-

tack the archers." But Jesus told them to remain quiet, and withdrew a little in the rear. Then approaching the armed troops, he said, in a loud and audible voice, "Whom seek ye?" The chief replied, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said, "I am he;" and scarcely had he pronounced these words when the whole band fell to the earth, as if stricken by an apoplexy. Judas, who remained standing, was much troubled, and seemed as if he would approach Jesus. The Lord, extending his hand to him, said, "My friend, wherefore art thou come?" The traitor stammered something, to which Jesus replied, "It were better that thou never hadst been born." The soldiers, arising, approached Jesus, expecting the sign by which Judas was to designate him, the traitorous kiss. The Saviour said to them a second time, "Whom do you seek?" They replied again, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus answered, "Have I not already told you, it is I you seek?—but let these go." At these words the soldiers fell a second time. When Jesus told them to arise, they arose

terrified, and Judas, coming to Jesus, kissed him, saying, "Master, I salute you." The Lord said, "Judas, dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss?" Then the soldiers, surrounding Jesus, laid hands upon him to take him. The apostles fell upon them, crying out, "Master, shall we strike with the sword?" Peter, more ardent than the rest, seized the sword, and striking the servant of the high priest, Malchus, he cut off his ear. Jesus said, "Peter, put up thy sword into the scabbard, for he who uses the sword will perish by the sword. Believest thou not that I could ask my Father, and he would give me twelve legions of angels? Must I not drain the cup which my Father has given me? How would the Scriptures be fulfilled if these things did not come to pass?" And approaching Malchus, Jesus touched his ear, prayed, and healed it. The soldiers and archers insulted him, saying, "It is the work of the devil—the ear was wounded by enchantment, and the same art has healed it." Jesus then said to them, "You have come to

apprehend me as an assassin, with sticks and clubs; I have taught daily among you in the temple, and ye have not apprehended me; but your hour, the hour of the powers of darkness, is come." They then bound him, and the apostles fled in every direction.

CHAPTER IX.

JESUS LED TO ANNAS AND CAIPHAS.

THE archers bound Jesus with great harshness, and with the brutality of murderers; they fastened his arms across his breast with new and hard cords, placing the right wrist beneath the elbow of the left arm, and the left wrist beneath the elbow of the right. They put around his waist a cincture of pointed iron, pressing his hands upon it by fastening them closely upon it with willow twigs. About his neck they placed a pointed collar to wound it, attaching thereto two leather strings, which they crossed like a

stole across his breast, and tied them tightly to the belt. To this cincture they fastened four long cords, by means of which they drew Jesus this way and that way, according to their inhuman caprices. They set out, after lighting a greater number of torches—guards, archers, and Pharisees, who overwhelmed him with insults. The disciples followed the soldiers at some distance, John a little nearer, but the Pharisees ordering his arrest, he fled. The archers dragged and maltreated Jesus in the most inhuman manner; they conducted him by the roughest roads, over stones, through the mud; and with knotted ropes they struck him as the butcher strikes the animal he is leading to the slaughter, accompanying even this with insults too gross to describe. Before arriving at the torrent of Cedron, he fell twice under their violence, but when they reached the bed of the river, their cruelty passed all bounds. They threw him down, telling him to drink. Jesus fell upon his knees, then upon his face; and only divine power could have preserved his life, even

here. The rocks being scarcely covered with water, the impress of his feet, elbows, and fingers was left upon that on which he fell: the very stones, being less hard and insensible than the heart of man, rendered testimony in these dreadful moments of the impression made upon them by the Supreme Truth. Thus was accomplished the prophetic passage in the Psalms: "He shall drink of the torrent in the way." His long woollen garment, drenched with water in passing the torrent, so clung around him that he could scarcely walk, and Jesus again fell to the earth. The archers drew him violently up, struck him with their cords, and fastened the border of his dripping robe to his cincture. It was not yet midnight when I saw Jesus inhumanly dragged over a narrow road covered with stones and briers. The Pharisees kept as near to him as the road would permit, and with their clubs of different forms, pushed him, goaded him, or struck him. When his naked feet became torn and bloody, they jeered him with cruel irony, saying,

"Thy precursor, John the Baptist, has not prepared a good road for thee here;" and repeating the words of Malachy, "I will send my angel before thee to prepare the way," they would add, "He has not done it here." At each jibe suggested by these men, the archers redoubled their barbarity. They had now approached a gate which led through a little suburb (called Ophel) to the Mount of Sion, where Annas and Caiphas dwelt. The good inhabitants of Ophel, awakened by the cries of the soldiery, ran from their houses, and with sorrow and lamentations met the procession. Many of them whom Jesus had healed, vented their gratitude in sighs and groans, and crowds pressed around him from all sides; throwing themselves on their knees, they clasped their hands, crying out, "Deliver this man to us! oh, deliver him to us! Who will help us? who will heal us? who will console us?" It was a heart-rending spectacle to see Jesus, pale, haggard, and bruised, with his hair disordered, his garments wet and soiled, dragged with ropes and pushed

with sticks, conducted by the half-naked archers and by the gross and insolent soldiery; the afflicted inhabitants of Ophel stretching towards him the hands he had cured of paralysis; the voices he had restored, pouring out their supplications to his murderers; the eyes to which he had given sight, shedding tears over his sufferings. Soon many of the lowest class in the valley, excited by the soldiery, and urged on by the enemies of Jesus, joined themselves to his escort, cursing and blaspheming him, repulsing and insulting his friends. From the Mount of Olives to the house of Annas, Jesus fell seven times. The sorrow of the good inhabitants of Ophel was increased by the sight of the mother of Jesus crossing the suburb in company with the holy women, going to the house of Mary, mother of Mark, which was at the foot of Mount Sion. On recognizing her they renewed their expressions of sorrow and compassion, so pressing around her that the sorrowful mother was almost carried away by the crowd; but Mary's agony was mute,

and on entering the dwelling she lost all consciousness in the arms of the holy women who surrounded her.

CHAPTER X.

JERUSALEM.

MEASURES TAKEN AGAINST JESUS BY HIS ENEMIES.

THE great and populous city of Jerusalem, and the tents of the strangers come up to the Pasch, were plunged in profound slumber, when the news of the arrest of Jesus awakened both his friends and his enemies. In all quarters of the city, those convoked by the messengers of the princes of the priests, were in movement, guided by the pale moonlight, or by their torches, along the sombre and deserted streets. All turned towards Sion. Annas and Caiphas had been immediately informed of the arrest of Jesus, and every thing was in commotion around

them. The halls were lighted, the avenues guarded, the messengers were seen running hastily through the city, to call together the members of the council, the Scribes and Pharisees, and those who were to take part in the judgment. Pharisees and Sadducees, and Herodians, from all parts of the country, had come up to Jerusalem for the feast. Those who were the greatest enemies of Jesus were summoned, with orders to collect at the moment of trial all those who would bring testimony against him. These assembled in a crowd at the tribunal of Caiphas. The buyers and sellers whom he had chased from the temple; doctors whom he had confuted before the people; impenitent sinners who did not wish to be healed, and sinners fallen again into their sins; vain young men who would not become his disciples; debauchees and other instruments of Satan, who, filled with rage against all holiness, excited his powers against the Holy of Holies. The very scum of the people, aroused by the enemies of Jesus, moved from all sides

towards the palace of Caiphas, to accuse of every crime the spotless Lamb of God, bearing the sins of the world, and to add their own iniquities to those with which he was already laden for expiation. Whilst this impure crowd was in agitation, many friends of Jesus, sorrowful and troubled, for they understood not the mystery in operation, wandered here and there, listening and groaning; others, weak and undecided, were scandalized, fell into temptation and wavered in their faith. The number of those who believed was but few. It was in those days as in ours, men wished to be good Christians, when so doing does not displease their fellow-men; but they blush at the cross when the world regards it with an evil eye. Nevertheless, there were many, who, from the beginning, were touched with the patience of Jesus under so many revolting cruelties, and who went away silent and discouraged. The noise increased about the tribunal of Caiphas. This part of the city was brilliantly illuminated with lamps and torches. Around

Jerusalem resounded the cries of the animals brought up by so many strangers to the sacrifice. Innumerable lambs were bleating, who were to be immolated in the temple on the morrow: one alone was to be sacrificed, because he wished it, and He opened not his mouth to complain, like the lamb before his shearers: this was the Lamb of God, pure and spotless, our Saviour Jesus. Over all these scenes, extended a heaven filled with marvellous signs. The moon arose, threatening and troubled with strange spots: it might be said that she was angry, trembling with dread of arriving at her plenitude, for it was the moment when Jesus was to die. Judas Iscariot, goaded by remorse of conscience, and tormented by the devil, wandered alone. The rage of Satan redoubled, to increase the load of the Lamb. The angels are divided between sorrow and joy; they would fain by their prayer before the throne bring help to Jesus, adoring in astonishment the miracle of divine justice and mercy, which, existing in heaven from all eternity, is now beginning its accomplish-

ment in time. The Lord Jesus beginning this night to suffer under Pontius Pilate, to-morrow will be crucified, will die and be buried. He will descend into hell, and rise the third day; then ascend into heaven, and will be seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from whence he will come to judge the living and the dead.

CHAPTER XI.

JESUS BEFORE ANNAS.

TOWARDS midnight Jesus was brought to the palace of Annas. Annas was seated in a large hall: his seat, raised some steps from the floor, was placed opposite the entrance: his twenty-eight councillors surrounded him. Jesus, accompanied by soldiers, was led by the archers before him to the foot of the steps: the rest of the hall was filled with soldiery, many of the lowest of the populace, the servants of Annas, and the false witnesses. Annas

was impatiently expecting the arrival of Jesus: he was filled with hatred against him, and excited by a cruel joy. The Saviour stood before him, pale, haggard, and silent, with his head bowed down,—the archers holding the ends of the cords which bound his hands. Annas, an old man, full of pride and insolence, seated himself with an ironical smile, feigning great surprise that Jesus was the prisoner who was to be brought before him. Addressing the Saviour, he said, "Jesus of Nazareth, where then are thy disciples and numerous adherents? Where is thy kingdom? Thou hast offered abundant insult to God and to the priests, together with thy violations of the Sabbath: speak, then, agitator and seducer. Thou hast wished to introduce a new doctrine: who hath given thee the right to teach? Speak, what is thy doctrine?" Jesus raised his wearied head, and looking at Annas, said, "I have spoken in public before the world; I have always taught in the synagogues and where the Jews assemble; I have said nothing in se-

cret: why dost thou question me? Look around thee, and ask those who have heard me, what I have said." At these words of Jesus, the face of Annas flushed with resentment and fury. An infamous archer perceived it, and with his hand, covered with an iron gauntlet, struck the mouth of Jesus, saying, "Answerest thou the high priest so?" Jesus, shocked by the violence of the blow, and pushed brutally by the sergeants this way and that, fell sideways upon the pavement, the blood gushing from his face: the hall resounded with murmurs, laughs, and outrages. They raised Jesus roughly up, who gently said, "If I have spoken ill, show me what I have said: if well, why do you strike me?" Annas, almost beside himself with the calmness of Jesus, told all who were present to bring forward their accusations. Confused, clamorous, and gross imprecations were heard,—"He has said that he is King, that God is his Father, that the Pharisees are adulterers; he excites the people and heals in the name of the devil, on the

Sabbath-day; he allows himself to be called the Son of God; says that he has been sent of God, and denounces woe to Jerusalem." All these charges were made at once, his accusers coming up to his very face to make their accusations and to add the greatest insults to their falsehoods. The archers pushed him and struck him, telling him to reply. To this Annas and his councillors added railleries and outrages, saying: "Is this thy doctrine? King, give thy orders; man sent from God, show thy commission." "Who art thou?" continued Annas, with cold insolence; "art thou the son of a poor carpenter, or art thou Elias, who was taken from earth in a chariot of fire?" And then taking a long scroll of paper, on which was written a series of accusations, indicated by capital letters, Annas rolled it up, placing it in a little hollow tube, which he carefully fastened to the end of a reed. He then presented the reed to Jesus, saying, with insulting irony, "Behold the sceptre of thy kingdom; in it are inclosed thy titles, dignities, and

rights. Carry it to the high priest; he may acknowledge thy mission, and give thee a reception suitable to thy dignity. Let the hands of this king be tied, and lead him before the high priest." They again tied the hands of Jesus, which had been unbound, fastening within them the mock sceptre which held the accusations, and thus conducted Jesus to Caiphas, amidst the scoffs and derision of the populace.

CHAPTER XII.

TRIBUNAL OF CAIPHAS.

JESUS was conducted into the vestibule of the house of Caiphas amidst clamors, insults, and blows. Scarcely had he reached the council when Caiphas cried out, "Here thou art, thou enemy of God, who troublest us this holy night!" The tube in which the accusations of Annas were inclosed was then detached from the mock sceptre which the

Saviour held in his hands, and Caiphas, on reading them, burst out into invectives against him; the archers struck him and pushed him with their pointed clubs, saying, "Reply, then; open thy mouth. Dost thou not know how to speak?" Caiphas, with even more impetuosity than Annas had shown, addressed a multitude of questions to Jesus, who remained calm, his eyes cast down. The archers, in order to force him to speak, renewed their blows; and a vile wretch, pressing his thumb strongly upon his sacred mouth, told him to bite. Then began again the false accusations elicited from the examination of the witnesses, falsehoods again and again repeated,—as that he healed the sick and cast out devils on the Sabbath-day; that he excited the people, and called the Pharisees a race of vipers and adulterers; that he associated with publicans and sinners, and called himself the bread of life, &c. The witnesses all contradicted each other, not one of them preferring a charge solidly established: their object seeming to be rather to

injure him than to advance facts. Caiphas and his council were ashamed and irritated by their contradictions; and Caiphas became angry at the cruelties exercised towards Jesus, and said, "Dost thou make no reply to these accusations?" The Saviour did not raise his eyes, and was silent. The archers seized him by the hair and threw his head back, giving him blows under the chin. Jesus still kept his eyes down. Caiphas, in a voice of fury, cried out, "I conjure thee by the living God to tell me if thou art Christ the Messiah, the Son of God." A moment of deep silence ensued, when Jesus, with a voice full of meekness and majesty—the voice of the Eternal Word—said: "I *am*—thou hast said it; and I tell thee thou shalt see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, and seated at the right hand of God." Hell heard this solemn declaration and trembled, vomiting out its fury in the house of Caiphas. Caiphas, taking the border of his mantle, rent it, crying out, "He has blasphemed; what further need have we of witnesses?

You have heard the blasphemy: what is your sentence?" They all cried out, "He is worthy of death." The rage of hell was now at its height, and it would seem as if darkness celebrated its victory over light. The high priest then said to the soldiers, "I deliver this king into your hands: render this blasphemer the honor he merits." He then retired with the members of the council into the interior of the palace.

CHAPTER XIII.

NEW OUTRAGES AT THE HOUSE OF CAIPHAS.

When Caiphas quitted the hall of the tribunal, a crowd of miserable wretches fell upon Jesus like a swarm of angry wasps. During the accusations of the witnesses, the archers and others had torn whole locks from the hair and beard of Jesus; the mob had covered him with spittle, striking him with their fists and clubs: now he delivered him-

self without reserve to their fury. They made crowns of straw and of the bark of trees, and placing them on his head and pulling them off, they would jeeringly exclaim, "Behold the Son of David, with his father's crown: he is more than Solomon—he is the king who makes a repast for the marriage of his son." Thus did they mock the Eternal Truth, declared by him in parables to men whom he came to save; and whilst doing so, they did not cease to strike him with their fists and with their sticks, spitting in his face. They took off his garment, tearing from his breast even the scapular which covered it, and throwing over his shoulders an old ragged mantle which scarcely reached to his knees; they placed about his neck a long iron chain terminated by two heavy rings, with points which wounded his knees when he walked; they tied his hands anew across his breast, placing in them the reed, whilst they continued to cover his divine face with their spittle. They had thrown all kinds of filth upon his hair; and now, bandaging his

eyes with a dirty cloth, they struck him, saying, "Great prophet, tell us who has struck thee." Jesus replied not a word, but sighed, praying to his Eternal Father for them. Having thus arrayed him, they dragged him by the chain into the great hall where the council had withdrawn. "Forward, king of straw!" they cried out, striking him with their knotty sticks; "thou shalt show thyself to the council with the testimonials of respect we have given thee." When they entered there, they redoubled their low railleries and sacrilegious allusions to the holiest things. Spitting upon him and throwing mud upon him, they cried out, "Behold thy unction as king and as prophet: how canst thou present thyself in such a state before the council? Thou desirest always to purify others, and thou art not pure thyself; but we will clean thee." Then taking a vasè filled with dirty water, they threw it in his face and over his shoulders; alluding also to the homage Magdalene had rendered him, they added, "Behold thy precious ointment—thy naid of

thirty sous: it may answer likewise for thy baptism of the pool of Bethsaida." This last mockery implied what they did not intend—the resemblance of Jesus to the paschal lamb; for the victims of the day of Passover were obliged to be washed in the pool of Bethsaida, receiving there a ceremonial aspersion before they were sacrificed in the temple. These wretches only meant an allusion to the cure of the sick man at the pool of Bethsaida. After this they led Jesus around the hall before the members of the council, who loaded him with sarcasm and insults. Under all this ignominy, Jesus never lost his unutterable dignity; and the light which beamed around him after he had declared himself the Son of God, served but to increase tenfold the blind rage of his enemies.

CHAPTER XIV.

DENIAL OF PETER.

WHEN Jesus said, "*I am*," and Caiphas rent his garments, the cry, "He is worthy of death," resounded in the midst of the most fearful tumult. Peter and John, who had suffered cruelly during the last frightful spectacle, obliged to witness it in silence and inaction, without even daring to utter a complaint, could finally bear it no longer. John went to join the mother of Jesus, who was with the holy women at the house of Martha, but Peter loved his divine Master too well to quit him; he could hardly contain his grief, and wept bitterly. Trying to hide his tears, and not wishing to remain longer in the hall of the tribunal, where he would have betrayed himself, he went out into the vestibule. Placing himself near the fire where the soldiers and people were crowded together, he was

forced to hear many horrible and disgusting things against Jesus, whilst these were recounting the scenes in which they had just taken part. Peter's silence and air of sadness made him suspected. The door-keeper approached the fire, and looking at him with a bold air, said to him, "Thou art one of the disciples of the Galilean." Peter, troubled and anxious, and fearing to be maltreated by these low creatures, replied, "Woman, I know him not; I know not what you mean." He then arose, wishing to get rid of his company. As he went out, the cock crew. Another servant, seeing him, said to those near him, "This man was also with Jesus of Nazareth;" and others said, "Art thou not one of his disciples?" Peter, frightened, protested loudly, "Verily, I am not; I know not the man." He crossed the inner court and entered the outer: there, reflecting upon what he had said, he wept bitterly. Unable to remain quiet, his love for Jesus induced him again to enter the inner court, and, turning to the entrance of the round hall, behind

the tribunal, he saw Jesus led with shouts and cries through a crowd of the lowest of the populace. Peter timidly approached, and although he was well aware that they observed him with suspicion, his anxiety urged him to enter the throng which surrounded the door, to look in. They were dragging Jesus about, with a crown of straw upon his head. He cast a sorrowful glance at Peter, mingled almost with severity. Peter's heart was pierced with sorrow, but hearing some one ask, "Who is this man?" he returned within the court, and remained for some time near the fires in the vestibule. Several persons observing him, began to speak in opprobrious terms of Jesus, and one of them, addressing Peter, said, "Truly, thou art one of his followers; thy accent betrays thee to be a Galilean." And as Peter was about to withdraw, a brother of Malchus came to him and said to him, "Art thou not he whom we saw in the Garden of Olives?" Peter, almost beside himself, swore with a fearful oath that he knew not the man. Then, running out

of the vestibule, into the court which sur rounded the house, the cock crew, and Jesus, whom they were conducting to prison across the court, turned towards Peter, giving him a look full of sorrow and compassion. Then the words of Jesus rushed upon his heart with a terrible force: "Before the cock crows twice, thou wilt deny me thrice." He had forgotten the promise made to his Master, that he would sooner die than deny him. He felt the enormity of his fault, and his heart was torn with remorse; he had denied his Lord at the moment he had seen him overwhelmed with insults and delivered to iniquitous judges, patient and silent in the midst of torments. Penetrated with remorse, he came into the outer court, his head covered, and weeping bitterly: he no longer feared suspicion, and would have confessed his guilt to the whole world. Who would dare to say, that, in the midst of such danger, trouble, and agony of mind, borne down by fatigue and a grief capable of upsetting reason itself, with a nature as ardent and as acute as Peter's, he

would be stronger than Peter? The Lord abandoned him to his own strength, and he was weak as all those who neglect this admonition, "Watch and pray, that ye fall not into temptation."

CHAPTER XV.

THE SORROWS OF MARY.

THE Holy Virgin was constantly in interior union with Jesus; she knew all that he suffered, and suffered with him. Like him, she never ceased praying for his murderers; but the cry of her maternal heart earnestly pleaded with the Eternal—rather that their crime should not be consummated, and that the heavy sorrows of her divine Son should pass away from him. Her desire was irresistible to be near him. When John sought her, and recounted to her the horrible spectacle he had just witnessed, she asked Magdalene and some of the other holy women to ac-

company her to the place where Jesus was suffering. John, who had only left his divine Master to console her who was dearest to him, conducted the holy women by the moonlight through the streets. They were veiled, but their sobs attracted the attention of many who were returning to their homes; and they were obliged oftentimes to hear painful invectives against Jesus. His blessed Mother contemplated interiorly her Son suffering in silence, and followed his example. More than once she fell senseless, and was carried under one of the gates of the city. Some kindly disposed persons, recognizing her, would stop a moment, compassionately saying, "O wretched Mother, deplorable Mother, rich in sorrows of the Holy One of Israel." As they approached the house of Caiphas, they encountered a new sorrow, for they were obliged to pass where, under a tent, they were working at the Cross of Jesus; for his enemies had orders to prepare a cross for the Saviour as soon as he should fall into their hands. that the sen-

tence of death might be executed as soon as possible after judgment; and it was their intention to take him before Pilate as early as possible in the morning, for this purpose. The workmen were cursing Jesus, because they were obliged to work during the night; and their words pierced the heart of the tender Mother, who prayed for the blind creatures preparing with maledictions a gibbet of punishment for her Son, but an instrument of their own redemption. Mary, accompanied by John and the holy women, crossed the outer, and stopped at the entrance of the inner court. She ardently desired it to be opened, as she knew she was only separated by this one door from her beloved Son, who was, at the second crowing of the cock, conducted to the dungeon under Pilate's house. The door at length opened, and Peter rushed out, with hands extended, head veiled, and weeping bitterly. He recognized John and the Holy Virgin, by the light of the moon and torches; and the stings of his conscience were aroused anew, as he

looked upon the Holy Mother. Mary said to him, "Simon, what has become of my Son?" These words resounded in the very depths of his soul, and he could not support her look. He turned away, wringing his hands, and with groans replied, "O Mother, do not speak to me! Your Son suffers unspeakably. Do not speak to me! They have condemned him to death, and I have basely denied him three times." John tried to approach the wretched man, but Peter, like one distracted, fled from the court to the grotto of the Mount of Olives, where the impress of the hands of Jesus had been left upon the stone. In this same cave, it is said, our first father Adam came to weep, after he had received the divine malediction. The heart of the Holy Virgin, overpowered by this new grief, that her Son should be denied, even by his own apostle, and by him who had first acknowledged him as Son of the living God, fell on the stone near the door; and on recovering herself, the first effort she made was to approach as near as

possible to her divine Son, that she might with her own ears hear his sighs. She heard them, and the injuries he received from the archers whilst inclosed in his narrow prison. The tender mother dared not linger long, the despair of Magdalene was so violent. The Holy Virgin, in her deepest sorrow, preserved a wonderful dignity, although she had to hear constantly, "Is not this the Mother of the Galilean? Her Son will certainly be crucified, but not before the festival. He is surely one of the greatest villains!" She withdrew towards the hearth in the vestibule of Pilate's house, where some of the populace yet lingered. In this place Jesus had said he was the Son of God, and was declared worthy of death. She lost her consciousness again,—John and the holy women carrying her away, more like a corpse than one living. The people said nothing, but remained in silence and astonishment. It seemed as if a heavenly spirit had passed through hell.

CHAPTER XVI.

JESUS IN PRISON.

JESUS was shut up in a little vaulted dungeon. Two archers were left to guard him, and these were occasionally relieved by others. His clothes were not yet given back to him, and he had no garment but the old purple mantle, covered with spittle, with which they had clothed him in derision. His hands had been tied anew. When Jesus entered the prison, he prayed his heavenly Father that he might accept all the ill usage he had suffered, and all that which he had yet to suffer, as an expiatory sacrifice for his murderers, and for all those who in suffering were guilty of anger and impatience. His murderers did not allow him an instant of repose. They tied him to a pillar in the middle of his prison, and did not even permit him to lean against it: so that he could

scarcely support himself on his weary, bruised, and swollen feet. They unceasingly insulted and tormented him; and when the two guards were weary, they were replaced by two others, who invented new cruelties. Are we not seized with horror at the recital of the innumerable outrages that our Saviour suffered so patiently for our salvation? and do we not feel like the murderer forced to lay his hand upon the wounds of his victim? Jesus suffered all without opening his mouth. And it was men—sinful men—who thus exhausted their rage against their brother, their Redeemer, their God. I also am a poor sinner, and it is for me that all this has been done. Oh! will I not say, "Lord, rather let me die than offend thee again by sin." Jesus in his prison prayed unceasingly for his murderers; but at length, overcome with fatigue, he allowed himself an instant's repose: I saw him lean against the pillar, surrounded with light. The day began to dawn—the day of his Passion, the day of Redemption: a trembling ray of light entered the loophole of the

dungeon, falling upon our wounded Paschal Lamb. Jesus raised his chained hands towards it and prayed aloud to his heavenly Father, thanking him, in the most touching accents, for the arrival of the day which the patriarchs had so much desired, and for which he had himself so ardently sighed since he had come upon earth, expressing this to his disciples when he said, "I am to be baptized with another baptism, and I am impatient until it be accomplished." When my Jesus returned thanks for such fearful suffering, I could not but exclaim, "Oh! give me—give me your sorrows: they are the price of my sins!" I felt annihilated with pity and love—my very heart torn—to see him welcome so joyously the first ray of light which ushered in the great day of his sacrifice—the day of man's redemption.

CHAPTER XVII.

DESPAIR OF JUDAS.

WHILST Jesus was in the dungeon, Judas, who had wandered in despair in the valley of Hinnom, approached the tribunal of Caiphas; he glided by the edifice, having yet suspended to his cincture the thirty pieces of silver, the price of his treason. All was silent there, and, without making himself known to the guards, he asked them what had become of the Galilean. "He has been condemned to death," they replied, "and will be crucified." He heard other persons talking together of the cruelties exercised towards Jesus; they spoke of his patience, and of the judgment that was to take place, and for which they were preparing, as the day was dawning. Judas hid himself behind the building, for he fled the sight of men as Cain, despair taking more and more possession of

his soul. But the place where he took refuge was that where they had been working at the cross of Jesus. The different pieces were arranged in order, and the workmen were sleeping by the side of them. Judas shuddered and fled. Whilst they conducted Jesus to Pilate, the traitor heard the crowd speak of himself as the "wretch who had sold him—his own disciple, who just before had eaten the Paschal Lamb with him." Anguish, repentance, and despair, struggled in the heart of Judas. Satan impelled him to run—the thirty pieces of silver at his side goading him as a spear from hell. He ran in haste after the procession, not to throw himself at the feet of Jesus, full of repentance to confess his fault, asking pardon of his merciful Redeemer, and wishing to die with him, but to throw from him, in the face of the whole world, the price of his treason—the cause of his crime. He entered the tribunal like a madman, where several members of the council had retired, after passing judgment upon Jesus. They looked at him with astonishment;

then, with a smile of contempt, fixed their eyes upon him, while he tore from his cincture the thirty pieces of silver. He presented them, saying, "Take back your money by which you induced me to betray the Just One; take back the money and deliver Jesus: I retract the deed, for I have grievously sinned in betraying innocent blood." The priests disdainfully withdrew their hands from the money he held out to them, as if afraid to sully themselves by touching the price of treason, saying, "What is it to us? It is your own affair: we know that we have bought him, and he is worthy of death. Keep your money, and trouble us no further." At these words they left him; and Judas, in rage and despair, his very hair stiffening upon his head, tore the belt from him that held the money, and, throwing it into the temple, fled from the city. I saw him again, running in the valley of Hinnom—Satan, under a horrible form, at his side, whispering in his ear all the maledictions of the prophets—repeating the words, "Cain, where is thy brother Abel?

What hast thou done? His blood cries out against thee; thou art accursed, a wanderer, and a fugitive upon the face of the earth." When he came to the torrent of Cedron, and saw the Mount of Olives, he shuddered, turned away his eyes, and seemed to hear again the words, "Judas, dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss?" Horror entered his very soul, and the enemy whispered, "It is here that David passed the Cedron, flying before Absalom. Absalom hung himself to a tree. David spoke of thee, when he said, 'He has rendered me good for evil—hatred for love. When he will be judged, let him be condemned; let his days be abridged, and let another receive his episcopacy.'" Judas, filled with these terrible thoughts, reached a place low and marshy, near the Mount of Scandal. Sounds from the city rushed upon his ears—Satan suggesting to him, "Now they are leading him to death: thou hast sold him. Knowest thou not the words of the law, 'He who sells a soul among his brethren, and receives the price of it, let him die the death?'

Finish, thou traitor, finish; end it, wretch, end it!" Judas, in despair, with his girdle hung himself to a tree in the hollow; and as he hung, his body burst and his bowels gushed out upon the earth.

CHAPTER XVIII.

JUDGMENT OF THE MORNING.

At the dawn of day, Caiphas, Annas, the elders, and the scribes, assembled together again in the great hall of the tribune, to render judgment in form. Caiphas gave orders to bring Jesus before his judges, in order that he might be immediately after judgment conducted to Pilate. The archers rushed tumultuously into the prison, untied his hands, and tearing off the old mantle they had put upon him, they clothed him in a long robe covered with filth, tied cords around his waist, and with the most horrible brutality dragged him out of the prison. They led him through the

soldiers assembled around the house, as a victim going to sacrifice, horribly disfigured by bad treatment, with no covering around him but the dirty garment. Disgust only suggested new cruelties to his enemies, pity finding no place in their hardened hearts. Caiphas was filled with rage against Jesus, presented before him in so deplorable a state, and said to him, "If you are the anointed of the Lord, the Messiah, tell us." Jesus raised his head and said, meekly and solemnly, "If I tell you so, you will not believe me; and if I interrogate you, you will not answer me, nor will you let me go: but hereafter the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God." They looked at each other, and said to Jesus, smiling disdainfully, "Thou art, then, the Son of God?" Jesus replied, "You have said it—I am." Then they all cried out, "Ye have heard the blasphemy from his own mouth: what further need have we of evidence?" At the same time they overwhelmed him with opprobrious epithets—wretch, vagabond, liar, one

who wished to be the Messiah, and to seat himself at the right hand of God. They ordered the archers to tie him anew, and to place about his neck the iron chain worn by criminals condemned to death, and to conduct him thus to Pilate.

CHAPTER XIX.

JESUS CONDUCTED TO PILATE.

THEY led the Saviour to Pilate through the most public part of the city. Annas and Caiphas, and many members of the great council, dressed in robes of state, headed the procession; the scribes, false witnesses, and wicked Pharisees, who had done their best to excite the people, followed next; at a little distance behind came Jesus, surrounded by soldiers, and conducted by the archers, the populace on each side filling the air with curses and imprecations. Jesus, covered only with his filthy garment, the long chain about

his neck striking his knees at every step, with his hands bound, was led by the archers by the cords attached to his cincture: he tottered as he walked, looking pale and haggard, his face bruised and cut, and totally disfigured by the outrages of the night; his enemies having never ceased their insults and bad treatment towards him. They had induced many of the lowest of the populace to attend the procession that they might mock his triumphal entrance into Jerusalem: these throwing in his path and under his feet, stones, bits of wood, and dirty rags, endeavoring by a thousand jests to deride his past triumph. Not far from the house of Caiphas, the holy Mother, with John and Magdalene, awaited his coming, hidden in an angle of the building. Mary's soul was always with Jesus, and when she could really approach him her love allowed her no repose, but impelled her upon the footsteps of her Son. After her nightly visit to the tribunal of Caiphas, she had remained some time in the Cenacle, plunged in mute anguish; but

when Jesus was drawn out of his prison to be led again before his judges, she arose, put on her veil and mantle, and, going out first, said to Magdalene and John, "Let us follow my Son to Pilate's house—I wish to see him with my own eyes." But her interior view had never conceived the terrible reality. The Son of God, the Son of Mary, chained, struck, pushed, dragged rather than walking, and buried in a cloud of injuries and maledictions—ah! if he had not been the most abject, the most oppressed, the only one loving and praying, in this tempest of unchained hell, his mother never would have recognized him. When he drew near, she cried out, sobbing—"Alas! is this my Son? It is—ah! it is my Son. O Jesus! my Jesus!" He passed close by her, and casting on her one look of tenderness and sorrow, she swooned away. John and Magdalene removed her from the fearful scene.

Jesus had to experience on this route the abandonment of friends in misfortune. The inhabitants of Ophel had at first crowded on

his path; but when they saw him in such a state of abasement, they were shaken in their faith, for they could not realize that this was the King, the Prophet, the Son of God. The Pharisees ridiculed their attachment to Jesus, crying out, "Behold your king; salute him: have you nothing to say to him on his way to his coronation, before he ascends the throne? His miracles are finished—the high priests have put an end to his sorceries." These poor people, who had received so many benefits from Jesus, could not withstand this terrible spectacle: mocked as he was by persons the most respected in the country, the high priests, and the Sanhedrim. The best withdrew in doubt, whilst the rest followed the train.

CHAPTER XX.

JESUS BEFORE PILATE.

It was about six o'clock in the morning, when Jesus arrived before the palace of Pilate. He was dragged by the archers to the foot of a stairway leading to a terrace, where Pilate was seated, with the insignia of Roman power about him, his officers and soldiers surrounding him. They made Jesus ascend the marble steps, and placed him before Pilate and the Jewish priests. Pilate had heard a great deal of Jesus; and when he saw him so horribly disfigured by bad treatment, his disgust and contempt for the Jewish priests redoubled, and he gave them to understand that he would not condemn Jesus to death without proof. He said to them, haughtily, "Of what do you accuse this man?" "If he were not a malefactor," they angrily replied, "we would not have

delivered him to you." "Take him, then," said Pilate, "and judge him yourselves, according to your law." "You know," replied the Jews, "that our law restricts us as to capital punishment." The enemies of Jesus were impatient to dispatch him before the feast, that they might be ready to sacrifice the paschal lamb. They knew not that the true paschal lamb was He, whom they had led to the tribunal of an idolatrous judge, whose threshold they feared to sully. When the Roman governor ordered them to make known their complaints, they presented three principal points of accusation; to each of which, ten witnesses rendered evidence. They endeavored, principally, to represent Jesus as trying to injure the rights of the Emperor. They accused him of being a seducer, exciting the people to revolt, and of violating the Sabbath-day, by healing upon it. Here Pilate interrupted them, saying, in a tone of mockery, "You are not, apparently, sick yourselves; or the healing would not so greatly excite your anger."

They added, "that he seduced the people, teaching horrible doctrines. That they must eat his flesh and drink his blood to have eternal life." Pilate looked at his officers with a smile, and said to the Jews, "One would suppose that you were following his doctrine to obtain eternal life; for you seem to wish to eat his flesh and drink his blood, by your cruelties." The second accusation was, that Jesus excited the multitude not to pay the tax imposed by Cesar. The third was, that he had made himself the chief of a large party; that he had denounced woe to Jerusalem, making a tumultuous entrance there, and obliging all the people to cry out, "Hosannah to the Son of David! Blessed be the empire of our Father David, which is now beginning." He had obliged royal honors to be paid to him, saying that he is the Christ—the anointed of the Lord—the Messiah—and the King promised to the Jews. Witnesses swore to the truth of these allegations.

CHAPTER XXI.

JESUS BEFORE PILATE (CONTINUED).

WHEN it was said that Jesus called himself the Christ—the King of the Jews—Pilate seemed thoughtful. He left the terrace to enter the hall of the tribunal, and passing Jesus, he looked attentively at him, ordering the archers to lead him into the hall. Pilate was a superstitious, weak-minded Pagan, easily troubled. He was not ignorant that the Jewish prophets had long since announced the coming of the anointed of the Lord: a king—a liberator—a redeemer; and that many of the Jews expected him. He knew that the kings of the East had sought him in the old Herod's reign, and that the Innocents had been massacred on this account: he had heard these traditions spoken of, but he did not believe them. Had he considered the subject, he would have imagined the ex-

pected one a powerful and victorious king; and it seemed to him absurd, that a man who appeared before him in such a state of abasement and suffering, should endeavor to pass himself off for this Messiah. But as the enemies of Jesus had presented this accusation in the light of an attempt against the rights of the Emperor, he ordered the Saviour to be brought before him, that he might interrogate him. Pilate regarded Jesus with astonishment, and said to him, "Art thou, then, the King of the Jews?" Jesus replied, "Sayest thou this of thyself, or have others told it to thee of me?" Pilate, angry that Jesus would believe him capable of asking such an extravagant question through his own suggestion, said, "Am I a Jew, to occupy myself with such fooleries? Thy people have delivered thee to me as worthy of death: tell me, then, what thou hast done?" Jesus, with majesty, replied, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, I would have servants to combat for me, that I should not fall into the hands of my ene-

mies. But my kingdom is not of this world." Pilate, somewhat perplexed by these solemn words, said to Jesus, in a more serious tone, "Art thou, then, a king?" The Saviour replied, "I am a king. I am born and come into this world to render homage to the truth: whoever is of the truth, hears my voice." Pilate looked at him, and said, rising, "The truth! what is the truth?" Pilate returned to the terrace. He could not understand Jesus; but he was convinced that he was not a king who could be of any injury to the Emperor, as he did not pretend to an earthly kingdom, and the Emperor gave himself but little concern about kingdoms of another world. He cried out from the height of the terrace to the high priests, "I find no crime in this man." The enemies of Jesus, greatly irritated, poured out a torrent of accusations against him; but Jesus remained silent, and prayed to his heavenly Father for them. Pilate, turning to him, said, "Have you no reply to these accusations?" Jesus said not a word. Then Pilate, hearing that he was a Galilean, said,

"This man is a subject of Herod: take him to him. He has come up to the festival: let him judge him." They then reconducted Jesus from the tribunal, and sent an officer to Herod, to tell him that Jesus of Nazareth, his subject, was to be brought before him. Pilate was glad to rid himself of the obligation of judging Jesus, and was well pleased to offer a politeness to Herod, with whom he had had some difficulty. The enemies of the Saviour, furious at being thus sent away by Pilate, in the face of the multitude, vented their anger upon Jesus. They bound him—dragged him, overwhelming him with insults and blows, into the midst of the crowd who filled the forum, continuing their cruelties until they reached the palace of Herod.

CHAPTER XXII.

JESUS BEFORE HEROD.

HEROD, having received the message of Pilate, awaited Jesus in a large hall, seated upon cushions which formed a kind of throne. The high priests entered, placing themselves on either side of Herod, but Jesus remained standing. Herod was much flattered that Pilate had thus publicly recognized his right to judge the Galilean, whom he rejoiced to see in such a state of abasement before him: Jesus never before having deigned to show himself to him. John had spoken of him in such magnificent terms, and Herod had heard so much from his spies concerning the Lord, that his curiosity was vividly excited to see him, and he prepared for a pompous interrogatory, to display his wisdom and power. Pilate had informed him that he could find no crime in Jesus; and Herod received the

false witnesses coldly. They tumultuously presented their accusations immediately on entering, but Herod paid them little attention, regarding Jesus with great curiosity. When he saw him so wounded and exhausted, his hair in such disorder, his face bloody, his garments soiled, this voluptuous prince felt pity mingled with disgust; and turning away his head, and calling on the name of God, he said to the priests: "Take him away and cleanse him: how can you bring a man so wounded and filthy into my presence!" The soldiers led Jesus into the vestibule, and bringing a basin of water, they washed him, without ceasing to maltreat him. Herod reproached the priests with their cruelty, and said: "It is easy to see that he has fallen into the hands of butchers: you begin your immolation before the time;" and he even feigned a little benevolence, ordering a glass of wine to be offered to Jesus to strengthen him; but Jesus shook his head, and would not drink. Herod spoke with much emphasis for a length of time, repeating to Jesus all he had

heard of him. He asked him many questions, and requested him to perform a miracle; but the Saviour replied not a word, remaining with his eyes cast down. Herod became irritated and disconcerted; he tried by flattery, and every means in his power, to overcome his silence, but could not: to his flow of words and numerous questions Jesus answered not a word. Annas and Caiphas, profiting by Herod's displeasure, recommenced their accusations; but he, although irritated, remained faithful to his political views, and would not condemn Jesus, whose presence inspired him with a secret terror; and he had often felt remorse for the murder of John. Herod overwhelmed the Saviour with contemptuous words, and said to his servants and guards, a hundred of whom stood near him: "Take this fool, this silly king, and render him the honors due to him—he is more a fool than a criminal." They then led the Saviour into a large court, where they loaded him with insults and cruelty. The priests, finding that Herod would not

enter into their views and condemn Jesus, distributed money among the people to induce them to demand tumultuously the condemnation of the Saviour; other emissaries menaced them with the anger of Heaven if they did not obtain the death of the sacrilegious blasphemer. Money was distributed to the soldiers of Herod to maltreat Jesus, even so as to cause his death.

CHAPTER XXIII.

JESUS BEFORE HEROD (CONTINUED).

WHILST the Pharisees were plotting, the Saviour had to undergo the gross brutalities of the soldiery, to whom Herod had delivered him. They pushed him into the court, and one of them brought a large white sack, in which they made a hole with their swords, and threw it, with bursts of laughter, over his head. Another brought a piece of red stuff, which they put about his neck. Then they

bent before him, spit upon him, and struck him in the face, because he would not reply to them. They offered him mock homage as king; then threw mud upon him, and, throwing him down upon the ground, they dragged him round the circular court with such violence that his sacred head struck against the columns and the angles of the wall. They then raised him up again, and renewed their insults: each servant and soldier seemed to glory in inventing some new outrage towards their Saviour, giving him even blows upon the head. Jesus looked at them with compassion. His suffering drew from him some groans and sighs, but these, instead of exciting their pity, brought upon him only fresh railleries. His head was bloody, and I saw him fall three times under their blows; but I saw angels weeping, and anointing his head, and it was revealed to me, that without this assistance from on high, these wounds would have been mortal. Time pressed; the princes and the priests were soon obliged to go to the temple, and they again urged

Herod to condemn Jesus; but he had his own views relative to Pilate, and sent him back to him in the white garment of derision. It was with redoubled fury that the enemies of Jesus led him back from Herod to Pilate. As they were ashamed to bring him back without condemnation, to a place where he had already been declared innocent, they returned by a much longer route, in order to show him in his humiliation to another part of the city. The road, too, was rougher and more unequal, and the archers never ceased, during the whole way, to maltreat Jesus. The long garment they had put about him, hindered his walking; he fell several times in the mud, and was raised up with kicks and blows upon the head. He had to undergo countless outrages, not only from his conductors, but from the people crowding on his way. The Saviour prayed that he might not die, as his passion was to accomplish our redemption. It was about a quarter after eight o'clock when the train reached the palace of Pilate. The Holy Virgin, Magdalene, and

several of the holy women, placed themselves where they could see every thing. John was with them. Herod's servant had already reached Pilate, to say that his master gratefully acknowledged the deference shown to him, but having found the celebrated Galilean only a stupid fool, he had treated him as such, and sent him back to him. Jesus was conducted anew through the insults of the populace, to the home of Pilate.

CHAPTER XXIV.

JESUS BROUGHT BACK FROM HEROD TO PILATE.

Whilst they conducted the Saviour to Herod, Pilate's wife desired an interview with him, and conjured him, by all that was sacred, not to injure Jesus, the Prophet, the Holy of Holies, recounting many wondrous visions she had had concerning him the previous night. Pilate, astonished and troubled, compared all that his wife told him of Jesus

with what he had seen himself during the trial of the Saviour; the fury of the Jews; the silence of Jesus, with his wonderful replies to his questions. Agitated and excited, Pilate yielded to the entreaties of his wife, promising her that he would not condemn him, and gave her his ring as a pledge that he would keep his promise.

When the train which accompanied Jesus reached the palace of Pilate, the archers, with their accustomed brutality, made him ascend the stairway, but his long garment embarrassing him, he fell upon the steps, staining the white marble with his blood. The enemies of Jesus had taken their stand at the entrance of the palace, and laughed at his fall, whilst the archers struck him to make him rise. Pilate was leaning upon his cushioned seat, with a small table before him; his officers surrounded him. He advanced upon the terrace, and said: "You have already brought this man before me as an agitator of the people. I have interrogated him in your presence, and have not found him guilty of

the crimes you impute to him: neither has Herod, for I sent you to him, and I find that he has not been condemned; I will, therefore, chastise him and release him. Violent murmuring arose, and Pilate, remembering the ancient custom of delivering a prisoner at the celebration of the festival, determined to propose the release of Barabbas, a wretch who, for murder and sedition, had been cast into prison; or that of Jesus—believing that the people would release Jesus. Pilate said, "It is the custom that a criminal should be liberated at the Pasch. Which shall I deliver to you, Barabbas, or the King of the Jews—Jesus, who they say is the anointed of the Lord?" To this proposition of Pilate there seemed to be some hesitation, and some voices only amidst the multitude cried out, "Barabbas." Mary Magdalene, John, and the holy women, were in a corner of the forum, trembling and weeping; and although the mother of Jesus knew well that the death of her beloved Son was the only means of man's salvation, she was overwhelmed with

anguish, ardently desiring to rescue her Son from his suffering. Magdalene prayed that so great a crime should not be consummated, and said, as Jesus, in the Garden of Olives, "If it be possible, let this chalice pass away." She hoped much, as the report was general that Pilate wished to save Jesus. Not far from them were groups of people of Capernaum, whom Jesus had healed and taught, and his blessed mother thought that these, at least, would choose Barabbas, to save their Lord and Saviour; but it was not to be so. Pilate had given his pledge to his wife, that he would not condemn Jesus, and, advancing upon the terrace, he cried out anew, "Which of the two shall I deliver to you, Jesus or Barabbas?" Here arose a general cry, "We will not have Jesus—give us Barabbas!" Pilate added, "What am I to do with Jesus, who is called Christ?" All cried out, tumultuously, "Let him be crucified, let him be crucified!" Pilate asked again, a third time, "What evil has he done? I find no crime in him worthy of death. I shall scourge him

and will release him." But the cry, "Crucify him, crucify him!" burst forth everywhere, like an infernal tempest. Then the weak Pilate released the malefactor Barabbas, and condemned Jesus to be scourged.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE FLAGELLATION OF JESUS.

PILATE, the cowardly and irresolute judge, had repeatedly said, "I find no fault in him; therefore I will scourge him and release him." The Jews, on their side, continued to cry out, "Crucify him! crucify him!" Then Pilate ordered that Jesus should be scourged after the manner of the Romans. The archers, pushing and striking Jesus with their clubs, conducted him to the forum, through a tumultuous and infuriated populace, reaching, at length, the column where flagellations

were usually given. The executioners hastened with whips, scourges, and cords, which they threw at the foot of the column. These wretches were six swarthy men, smaller in stature than Jesus, malefactors from the frontiers of Egypt, condemned as criminals to labor at the public works, and chosen from the lowest and most wicked as executioners in the Pretorium. They were girded, their breasts covered with a piece of leather, and their arms were naked. Already they had fastened criminals to this same column, and scourged them to death. They resembled savage beasts or demons, and were half drunk. After striking Jesus with their fists, and dragging him with their cords, although he made no resistance, they tore off, like furious dogs, Herod's mantle of derision from his shoulders, whilst Jesus unfastened with his swollen and bloody hands his under garments: they then bound him to the column. Their victim trembled and shuddered, embracing the column and praying in a most touching manner. He turned his

head an instant towards his mother, who was in a corner of one of the market stalls, and she was carried away senseless in the arms of the holy women who accompanied her. The archers then tied his hands high above the iron rings, and extended his arms so much, that his feet, which were strongly bound to the foot of the column, scarcely reached the ground. The Holy of Holies, thus violently extended upon the malefactor's column, two of these furious wolves, thirsting for his blood, scourged his sacred body from head to foot! Their whips or scourges seemed of white flexible wood: they might have been lashes of hard white leather. Our Saviour, the Son of God, shuddered and writhed as a worm under the strokes: his piercing gentle cries, like a touching prayer, mingled with the harsh sound of the scourge. From time to time, the shouts of the people and of the Pharisees came, like the bursting of a storm-cloud, to stifle these sorrowful moans, so filled with blessings for his enemies. "Crucify him! let him die!" was

their cry; for Pilate was still haranguing the multitude; and when he wished more particularly to be heard, a trumpet was sounded to proclaim silence. From time to time, above the sound of the lash, were heard the groans of Jesus, the imprecations of the archers, and the bleating of the paschal lambs, which, at some distance, were washing in the pools, preparatory to sacrifice. These sounds were most affecting, as they were the only voices in unison with the groans of the Saviour. The Jewish people remained at some distance from the place of flagellation, Roman soldiers being placed at different stations, to prevent their too near approach. Many persons came and went, silent or else insulting. Some were touched at the sight, as if a ray from Jesus struck them. I saw naked young men preparing fresh scourges, others trying to find stronger branches for whips; whilst soldiers belonging to the chief priests gave the executioners money, and supplied them with drink of a strong deep color, to inebriate them, and strengthen by

excitement their cruelty against their innocent victim. Every quarter of an hour these murderers were relieved by two others. The body of Jesus was covered with blue, black, and red spots, and his blood flowed upon the earth. Insults and mocking were heard on all sides. The second two fell upon him with fresh rage, and made use of another kind of instrument of torture—thorny sticks, with knots and joints, which so lacerated his flesh, that the blood flew to a distance, and their arms were covered with it. Jesus groaned, prayed, and trembled! Several strangers, passing through the forum on camels, looked at him with sorrow and affright: they were travellers, some of whom had received baptism from John, and had heard the sermon of Jesus on the mount. New executioners scourged Jesus with thongs having iron fangs at the ends, which raised pieces of flesh at every stroke. Ah! who can describe this terrible and sorrowful spectacle? Yet their rage was not satisfied. They unfastened Jesus, and tied him anew

with his back to the column: not being able to stand, they passed cords over his breast, under his arms, and below his knees, tying his hands behind the column. Then they fell again upon him like wild beasts, and one of them, with a new thong, struck his face. The body of the Saviour was one wound: he looked at his murderers with eyes filled with blood, which seemed to plead for pity; but their rage only redoubled, and the groans of Jesus became weaker and weaker. This horrible flagellation had lasted three-quarters of an hour, when a stranger, a relative of the blind Steciphon whom Jesus had cured, rushed towards the column with a knife, crying out indignantly, "Stop; do not scourge the innocent to death!" The astonished executioners stopping hastily, he cut the cords, and was lost in the crowd. Jesus fell heavily upon the ground, bathed in his blood. They left him there, and went to call the servants, who were busied in twining a crown of thorns. As Jesus lay prostrate in his blood at the foot of the column,

I saw some wretched creatures holding each other by the hand, and, dancing, approach him; they stopped for a few moments, looking at him with disgust. The agony of his wounds seemed to redouble, as he raised his wounded face towards them. They turned away, the soldiers and archers laughing at them. I saw, several times during the flagellation, angels weeping around Jesus; and I heard him pray unceasingly to his Father for our sins, amidst the shower of blows that fell upon him. Whilst he lay bathed in his blood, I saw an angel present him something luminous, which restored his strength. The archers returned, and struck him with their feet and with sticks, telling him to get up; then they dragged him up, and set him upon his trembling limbs. They did not allow him to put on his garment, which they had thrown across his shoulders, and with which he wiped the blood from his face; but they hurried him towards the place where the high priests were seated, who cried out, "Let him die! let him die!" turning away

from him in disgust. They then led Jesus into the interior court, amidst the shouts and derision of the populace.

CHAPTER XXVI.

I SAW the holy Mother of Jesus in continued ecstasy during the flagellation of her divine Son. She witnessed it interiorly, and suffered with unspeakable love and sorrow in union with him. Feeble groans came occasionally from her mouth, and her eyes were red with weeping. She lay, veiled and extended, in the arms of Maria Heli, her relative. Her friends, and those of Jesus, trembling and sobbing, pressed closely round her. Magdalene lay prostrate on the earth, her loose hair falling about her face and shoulders. When Jesus, after the flagellation, fell at the foot of the column, I saw Claudia Procles, the wife of Pilate, send to the holy Mother large pieces of linen. I do not know

whether they were meant to stanch the wounds of Jesus, in case he was delivered after his cruel punishment, or whether the compassionate pagan designed them for the use for which they were really employed. When Mary came to herself, she saw her wounded Son conducted by the archers away from the forum; he wiped the blood from his eyes to look at her, and she extended her arms towards him, her eyes following the bloody traces of his footsteps. As the people withdrew a little on each side, she, with Magdalene, approached the column, and with the linen wiped up the precious blood of Jesus from the earth, the holy women, with some few kind-hearted persons, screening them from the observation of the Jews. After this, I saw the holy Mother wandering through the streets of Jerusalem, and over the valley of Hermon, her face pale and worn, her eyes red with weeping. Her appearance was simple and dignified; there was no disorder in her dress, every fold of which seemed to breathe holiness. She sometimes looked ma-

jestically about her, and, in turning her head, the movement of her veil occasionally allowed a glimpse of her singular beauty. Her movements were not violent, for in her deepest sorrow she was always calm. Her dress was wet with the dews of night, and with her incessant tears, which flowed abundantly. Magdalene's appearance was very different: she was taller, and more robust than the blessed Mother. Passion, repentance, and the violence of her grief, had destroyed her beauty. It was fearful to see her, so disfigured had she become by her despair, which knew no bounds. Her long hair, unbound, flowed loosely under her wet veil, which was rent almost to pieces. She thought of nothing but her grief, and almost resembled a mad woman. Many persons of the neighborhood who had known her in her scandalous days, elegant and richly dressed, and seeing her now, after having missed her so long from the gay world, pointed at her, pursuing her with insults: some of the lower classes even threw mud at her, but she heeded them

not, so absorbed was she in the remembrance of her sin, and of the sufferings of her Lord.

CHAPTER XXVII.

JESUS IS CROWNED WITH THORNS.

WITHIN the inner court were assembled about fifty wretches, servants of the jailers, archers, soldiers, slaves, and others of the same class. The people crowded about the edifice, and it was soon surrounded by hundreds of Roman soldiers, exciting by their laughs and jeers the murderers of Jesus, as public applause excites comedians. In the middle of the court lay the trunk of a column, on which they placed a very low stool covered with broken flint-stones and potsherds. Tearing the garment of Jesus from his wounded and bleeding shoulders, they put upon him a soldier's old scarlet mantle, which did not reach his knees. They dragged him to the seat they had prepared for

him, and brutally threw him upon it. They then placed the crown of thorns like a bandeau around his head, tying it tightly behind. It was made of three branches of thorns twisted together, the thorns purposely turned inward. When they had fastened it on the head of Jesus, they put a thick reed in his hand. This was all done with a mock gravity, as if they had really crowned him king. They then took the reed from his hands, and struck the crown of thorns so violently that the eyes of the Saviour were inundated with blood. They knelt before him, making grimaces, spitting in his face and buffeting him, whilst they cried out, "Hail, king of the Jews!" Then they would throw over his seat with loud bursts of laughter, and violently reseat him upon it. I cannot recount all the outrages invented by these men. Jesus suffered a horrible thirst from the fever produced by his wounds; he shuddered and trembled from head to foot; his flesh was torn to the very bones, his tongue drawn up; and the blood which flowed from his sacred

head was the only refreshment for his burning and half-opened mouth. Jesus was thus treated amidst the laughs and cries of joy from the whole cohort ranged about the Pretorium.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ECCE HOMO.

JESUS, covered with the scarlet mantle, the crown of thorns upon his head, and the sceptre of a reed in his chained hands, was reconducted to the palace of Pilate. He could not be recognized, his eyes, face, and beard covered with blood, and his body but one wound; he walked bent and trembling. When he appeared before Pilate, this great man could not but shudder with horror and pity whilst the priests insulted him with their raillery. When Jesus ascended the steps, Pilate advanced on the terrace, and a trumpet was sounded to announce that the govern-

or wished to speak. He addressed himself to the chief priests and to their assistants, saying: "I have brought him once more before you, that you may know that I cannot find him guilty of any crime." It was a terrible and heart-rending spectacle, to see the Son of God, covered with blood and wearing the crown of thorns, looking down upon the multitude with his meek and almost extinguished eyes. Pilate, pointing to him, cried out to the Jews, "Behold the man!" The chief priests and their adherents, filled with rage, cried out, "Let him die! let him be crucified!" "Have you not enough?" said Pilate: "he has been treated in a way that will prevent him from wishing to remain longer king." But they cried out still louder these terrible words: "Let him die! crucify him!" Pilate, ordering the trumpet to be sounded again, said: "Take him then yourselves, and crucify him, for I cannot find him guilty of any crime." Here some of the chief priests cried out, "We have a law, and by that law he ought to die, because he has

called himself the Son of God." These words, "he calls himself the Son of God," reawakened all Pilate's superstitious fears. He ordered the Saviour to be removed, went to him, and asked him whence he came. Jesus was silent, and Pilate added: "Thou makest no reply: knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee or to release thee?" Then Jesus answered, "Thou couldst have no power over me except it were given to thee from above: therefore he who has delivered me to thee, has the greater sin." Claudia, anxious about the evident irresolution of her husband, sent him the ring to recall to him the promise he had made; but he returned her a vague and superstitious answer about his referring the case to his gods. Pilate, undecided, was like a man beside himself: he addressed himself again to the enemies of Jesus; but as they demanded his death more violently than ever, he determined to draw from the Saviour a reply which would decide him. He returned again to Jesus, and regarding him attentively, so

bloody and disfigured, he said to himself, "Can this be a God?" Then suddenly addressing him, he conjured him to tell him if he were the God, the king promised to the Jews. Jesus spoke to him gravely and with severity, answering his questions concerning his royalty and his empire; he unveiled also to Pilate many of his secret crimes, assuring him that the Son of Man would one day come to pronounce upon him a just sentence. Pilate, half frightened, half irritated, at the words of Jesus, went back to the terrace and declared again that he wished to deliver Jesus. Then they cried out, "If you deliver him, you are no friend of Cæsar's; for he who would make himself king, is an enemy to Cæsar." On all sides was heard the cry, "Crucify him! crucify him!" and Pilate, finding his efforts to save Jesus unavailing with the furious multitude, had water brought, and, washing his hands before them, cried out from the terrace: "I am innocent of the blood of this just man: look ye to it." Then arose the horrible and

unanimous cry, "His blood be upon us and upon our children!"

CHAPTER XXIX.

JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

PILATE, even more undetermined than ever, his conscience telling him, "Jesus is innocent," his wife saying, "Jesus is holy," made one more effort to save him; but the Jews menaced him with the anger of the emperor, and fearing an insurrection among the people, he determined to do their will—to act contrary to justice, to his own convictions, and to the promise he had made his wife in the morning. After the Jews had pronounced the malediction upon themselves and upon their children, Pilate began his preparations to pronounce the sentence of death in due form. He arranged himself in his ceremonial dress, and surrounded by soldiers—the officers of the tribunal preceding him with a trumpet at

their head—he went from his palace to the forum, where, opposite the column of flagellation, a judgment seat had been raised, where sentences were pronounced. Jesus, wearing his scarlet mantle and crown of thorns, was led by the archers before the tribunal, and placed between the two malefactors. When Pilate took his seat, he said again to the enemies of Jesus, "Behold your king!" They all cried out, "Crucify him!" "Ought I to crucify your king?" urged Pilate. "We have no king but Cæsar," replied the high priests. Pilate said nothing more, but prepared to give sentence. The two thieves had been already condemned to the death of the cross, but the chief priests had demanded that their execution might be delayed, in order to offer a greater affront to Jesus, by associating with him, in his punishment, these malefactors of the lowest class Pilate commenced by a long preamble, stating that the chief priests desired the death of Jesus because he had disturbed the public peace, and violated the law, in causing him-

self to be called the Son of God, and the King of the Jews. The people had likewise tumultuously demanded his death; and the miserable wretch added, that he had found this judgment conformable to justice:—he, who had never ceased to maintain the innocence of Jesus! He concluded by proclaiming: "I condemn Jesus of Nazareth to be crucified." And he ordered the archers to bring the cross. The Mother of Jesus, after the flagellation, had mingled anew with the crowd, that she might hear the sentence of the death of her Son and her God. And when she heard the words of Pilate, and knew that this most cruel and ignominious death was inevitable, she fell, perfectly unconscious,—John and the holy women carrying her away, that the blind creatures who surrounded her, might not put the climax to their crime by insulting her in her sorrows. Pilate then wrote an inscription for the cross on a tablet of dark color. The high priest found fault with the inscription, and begged that he would not write, "The King of the

Jews," but that, "He called himself the King of the Jews." Pilate would not listen to their murmurs, but replied to them angrily, "What I have written, I have written."

CHAPTER XXX.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE CRUCIFIXION.

When the sentence of death had been pronounced upon Jesus, he was delivered to the archers as their prey. They brought his garments, of which they had stripped him at the house of Caiphas, and untied his hands, in order to put them upon him. They tore from his body the scarlet woollen mantle, and thus reopened all his wounds. Jesus tremblingly put upon himself his under-garment, and they threw his scapular over his shoulders. As the crown of thorns, being so large, prevented them from passing over

his head his mother's seamless garment, they tore the crown from his head, causing his wounds to bleed afresh with indescribable torture. The archers then put it upon him, with his cincture and cloak, fastening anew around his waist the pointed iron belt, to which was attached the cords by which they dragged him. All this was done with their accustomed brutality. The two thieves were placed on his right and left. He who became converted, was calm and thoughtful; the other was gross and insulting, uniting with the archers in cursing Jesus, who looked lovingly at his two companions, offering for their salvation all his sufferings. The archers, having collected together all the instruments of punishment, prepared for this terrible and sorrowful journey to Calvary. Some soldiers remained near the condemned, whilst Pilate and his guard, with twenty-eight Pharisees upon horseback, made ready to accompany Jesus to execution. The archers conducted the Saviour to the middle of the square: some slaves brought the cross,

and threw it at his feet. Its two arms were for the moment attached by cords to the principal piece. Jesus, kneeling down close to the cross, put his sacred arms around it, and kissed it three times. In a low voice, he addressed to his Father a touching prayer of thankfulness for the redemption of mankind, which he then began. The archers raised Jesus up on his knees, and obliged him to place, with great difficulty, this heavy burden upon his right shoulder. I saw angels invisibly assist him, without which he could not even have raised it from the ground. Whilst Jesus prayed, the executioners made the two thieves place the transverse pieces of their crosses upon their necks, and to these their hands were fastened. The main pieces were carried by slaves. The trumpet of Pilate's cavalry was heard; and one of the Pharisees on horseback approached Jesus, yet kneeling under his load, and said to him, "This is enough of fine talking: go on." They raised him up violently, and he felt pressing upon his shoulders all the

weight of the cross, which we are to carry after him, according to his true and holy command to follow him

CHAPTER XXXI.

JESUS CARRIES HIS CROSS.

THEN began the triumphal march of the King of kings,—so ignominious upon earth, so glorious in heaven! They had fastened two cords to the end of the tree of the cross, and two archers supported it in the air; four others held the cords attached to the girdle of Jesus. The Saviour, under his load, recalled to me Isaac carrying up the mountain the wood destined for his sacrifice. Pilate's trumpet gave the signal for departure: clad in armor, he placed himself at the head of a detachment, his officers and a troop of cavaliers attending him. The trumpet sounded at every corner of the streets, proclaiming the sentence A little behind came

a troop of men and children, who carried cords, nails, and wedges; others carried poles, ladders, and the principal pieces belonging to the crosses of the thieves. Then followed the Pharisees, and a young man bearing before him an inscription for the cross of Jesus · he held also, on the top of a pole, the crown of thorns, which they had taken from the head of Jesus whilst he carried his cross. Now came the Saviour, his feet bare and bloody, bending under the heavy weight of the cross; he was trembling, torn, and bleeding, having neither ate, drank, nor slept since the Supper on the evening before. Exhausted by the loss of blood, devoured by fever, thirst, and an infinitude of pains, with his right hand he supported the cross on his right shoulder; with his left hand he occasionally made efforts to raise his long robe, which became entangled under his wounded feet. Four archers held, at some distance, the ends of the cords attached to his cincture. The two before him drew him towards them, whilst the two behind drew him back, so

that he could not steady his steps. His hands were wounded by the ropes with which they were tied; his face was swollen and bloody; his hair and beard wet with blood. His cross and chains pressed his woollen garment so closely to his body, that it pressed into his wounds, and reopened them. Around him there was naught but derision and cruelty; but his lips prayed, and his dim look pardoned. The street through which Jesus passed was very narrow and dirty. The people, from their windows, abused him; the slaves threw mud and filth at him; and even the children threw stones at him, or under his feet!

CHAPTER XXXII.

FIRST AND SECOND FALL OF JESUS UNDER THE CROSS.

THE street, towards the end, became larger, and ascended a little, passing a subterranean aqueduct. Before the ascent, a hole was to be passed, which, after rain, was filled with water and mud; and a large stone was placed in it to make the passage easier. When Jesus reached this place, he had no further strength to walk, and as the archers dragged him and pushed him without mercy, he fell at full length upon the stone, the cross falling near him. His murderers loaded him with imprecations and blows. The train stopped for a moment, somewhat disordered by this interruption, and it was in vain that he held out his hand for help. "Ah!" said he, "it will soon be finished." And he prayed for his murderers; but the Pharisees cried out,

"Raise him up, or he will die under your hands." Jesus, sustained by a supernatural strength, raised his head; and these wretches, instead of trying to alleviate his sufferings, replaced upon it the crown of thorns. When they had set him again upon his feet, they laid the cross upon his shoulder, and he was obliged, with unspeakable suffering, to keep his head, torn by the thorns, upon one side, to make place for the burden with which he was laden. The sorrowful Mother of Jesus, after the iniquitous judgment had been pronounced, could not resist the desire of seeing again her divine Son. Accompanied by a few of the holy women, she begged John to conduct her to some place where Jesus must pass. She was deadly pale, but closely veiled, and enveloped in a mantle of grayish blue. Soon was heard the noise of the approaching train, the sound of the trumpet, and the voice of the herald at the corner of the street. The noise becoming more frightfully distinct, Mary prayed, and said to John, "Ought I to see this sight, or should I fly

from it? Can I bear it?" She stopped, nevertheless, in breathless agony, to watch the train as it passed. When those who carried the instruments of torture approached with an insolent and triumphant air, the Mother of Jesus trembled and groaned, clasping her hands; and one of them asking, "Who is this wretched woman?" another replied, "It is the mother of the Galilean." When his executioners heard these words, they overwhelmed the sorrowful Mother with mockeries. One of them, taking in his hand the nails, he presented them to her in a jeering way. She looked at them, and leant against the doorway to support herself, lest she should fall. Her lips grew livid, and her face like death. The Pharisees passed on horseback; after them, the child bearing the inscription; and then came her most holy Son, Jesus, tottering and bending under the weight of his cross, his head painfully inclined to one side, and crowned with thorns. He threw upon his Mother a look full of compassion, and stumbling, fell for

the second time upon his hands and knees. Mary, in the violence of her grief, seeing no one but her Son, rushed from the doorway, and, regardless of soldiers or of executioners, threw herself into the midst of the archers who were striking Jesus, fell on her knees before him, and pressed him in her arms. I heard the words, "My Son!—my Mother!" There was a momentary disorder. John and the holy women tried to raise Mary up, whilst the archers abused her. "Woman," cried they, "what are you doing here? Had you taken more care to bring him up well, he would not now be in our hands." The hearts of some soldiers were touched. Some pushed the holy Mother back, but not one of the archers touched her. She fell, as if dead, upon her knees, against the angular stone of the doorway.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THIRD FALL OF JESUS—SIMON OF CYRENE AND VERONICA.

THE procession arrived before the gate of an old wall within the city. Jesus here again stumbled and fell, and the cross rolled upon the ground. He could not raise himself up, and some well-dressed persons, going to the temple, and passing by him, cried out, compassionately, "Alas! the poor man is dying." A tumult arose, for Jesus could not be placed upon his feet; and the Pharisees said to the soldiers, "He must die, if you do not find some one to help him to carry his cross." They saw, at a little distance, a pagan, called Simon of Cyrene, who, with his three sons, was carrying bundles of branches, for he was a gardener; and seizing him, they ordered him to aid the Galilean to carry his cross. He refused, at first, but was obliged to yield

to force. Simon felt great disgust and repugnance to do it, on account of the sad state in which he saw Jesus—his garments being all covered with mud. But the Saviour wept, and looked at him so imploringly, that Simon helped him to rise, and the soldiers bound upon his shoulders one of the arms of the cross, which much lightened the burden of Jesus, and the train resumed its march. Simon was a robust man, forty years of age. Two of his sons, Rufus and Alexander, joined the disciples. Simon had helped his Saviour to carry the cross but a very short time, when he felt his heart deeply touched by grace. The train entered a long street, through which many were passing, on their way to the temple. Some turned away from the sight of Jesus, through a pharisaical fear of sullying themselves, whilst others looked at him with pity; when a woman of fine stature, and very imposing appearance, holding a young child by the hand, came out from a handsome house, and threw herself before the train. It was Seraphia, wife of

Sirach, member of the Council of the Temple. She was called Veronica (*Vera icon*, true portrait), on account of what she did on this day. Seraphia had prepared an aromatic wine, with the pious desire of offering the Saviour a drink upon his way of the cross. She advanced, veiled, into the street, a piece of linen over her shoulders, and holding a vase filled with the wine. They wished to repulse her, but she forced herself a passage through the populace—through the soldiers and the archers—until she reached Jesus, when she fell upon her knees before him, and, unfolding the linen, said to him, "Permit me to wipe the face of my Lord!" Jesus took the linen, applied it to his bloody face, and, blessing her, returned it. Seraphia, after kissing it, placed it under her mantle and arose. The young girl timidly raised the vase to Jesus, but the archers would not let him drink. The boldness and promptitude of this action had excited some commotion among the populace, causing the train to stop, and had thus permitted Veronica to present

the handkerchief to Jesus. The Pharisees and archers, irritated by this interruption, and, above all, by the public homage offered to Jesus, began to strike and maltreat him, whilst Veronica hurried to her home. Entering her room, she spread out the handkerchief upon the table, and fell senseless by it: the little child knelt, weeping and sobbing, by her. A friend who came in, finding her thus, saw upon the unfolded linen near her, the bloody face of Jesus, imprinted in the most marvellous manner. After coming to her senses, Seraphia knelt, weeping, and crying out, "Now I wish to quit all for my Lord; he has given me a remembrance of himself." The handkerchief was of very fine linen, called a suaire, and was usually worn about the shoulders. She kept it always hung at the head of her bed, and after her death it was given to the Blessed Mother, who left it to the apostles, and to the Church.

CHAPTER XXXIV

FOURTH AND FIFTH FALL OF JESUS—THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM.

THE train approaching the gate of the city of Jerusalem, the archers pushed Jesus violently into a ditch, which he was obliged to pass on his way; and Simon of Cyrene, trying to pass on one side, the cross turned, and Jesus fell, for the fourth time, in the mud In a voice choked with sighs, he exclaimed, "Alas, alas! Jerusalem, how much I have loved thee! I would have gathered thy children together as the hen gathers her young ones under her wings; but thou wouldst not, and drivest me cruelly from thy gates!" The Pharisees, having heard these words, insulted him anew—struck him, and dragged him forward to pull him out of the ditch. Simon of Cyrene, indignant at the cruelties exercised towards Jesus, cried out: "If you do not end these infamies, I will throw down the cross, at the peril of my life"

Where the road to Calvary begins, a placard had been placed, announcing the condemnation of Jesus and of the two thieves. At the angle of this road was a company of women, weeping and groaning. As Jesus approached them, he was falling almost senseless, when Simon, throwing down the cross, flew to support him. At the sight of his blessed countenance, so pale and bloody, the women cried aloud, and, according to the Jewish custom, presented him their suaires to wipe his face. The Saviour, turning towards them, said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children, for the day will soon come when it will be said, 'Blessed are the barren, and those who do not give suck.' Then will they begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall upon us,' and to the hills, 'Cover us,' for if these things are done in the green wood, what shall be done in the dry?" There was a delay here. Those who carried the instruments of execution went up the Mount of Cavalry, followed by a hundred Roman soldiers belonging to Pi-

late's escort. The train, having reached the gate, proceeded towards the interior of the city; and when beginning to ascend the rough mountain of Calvary, Jesus, bending under his burden, and under the strokes of his murderers, fell for the sixth time; and this fall was very painful, for they pushed him and struck him more brutally than ever, till, arriving at the summit, he fell under the cross a seventh time. Simon of Cyrene, maltreated and fatigued himself, wished to comfort Jesus, but the archers drove him insultingly away. He joined, soon after, the disciples of the Saviour. The archers, having raised Jesus from the ground, unbound the pieces of the cross, and laid them near him. Alas! what a heart-rending spectacle did he present at the place of his punishment! Weak, torn, and bloody, the archers threw him again insultingly down, saying, "King of the Jews, we will prepare thy throne." But he lay down and extended himself of his own accord upon the cross, that they might take his measure. Then they led him to an

excavation made in the rock, like a cave or cistern, and pushed him into it so rudely that he would have broken his knees against the stones, if angels had not borne him up. I heard him groan in a way that tore my very heart. They closed the entrance of the cave, and left guards near it. Then the archers began their preparations. In the midst of a circular platform, on the most elevated point of the rock of Calvary, they dug the holes for the three crosses, placing those of the thieves at the right and left of Jesus. The mother of Jesus, with many of the holy women, followed his footsteps to Calvary. What a sight was this terrible cross, the hammer, the cords, the nails, for Mary! His executioners, too, drunk and half naked, preparing, with imprecations, this cruel instrument of punishment for their Saviour! The absence of her divine Son prolonged the martyrdom of the Mother. She knew not where he was, and longed to see him, although trembling at the thought of the torments he was to undergo. From the morning, early, until ten o'clock,

it hailed at intervals—then the sky cleared; but towards mid-day a reddish fog clouded the sun.

CHAPTER XXXV.

JESUS STRIPPED AND NAILED TO THE CROSS.

FOUR archers returned to the place where they had imprisoned Jesus, and pulled him violently out, overwhelming him with blows and outrages, during the few steps he had to take whilst dragging him to the platform. These wretches had with them vases containing vinegar and gall, and a drink which seemed to be a mixture of myrrh and absynth. They presented a glass of the latter to Jesus, but, putting it only to his lips, he would not drink of it. Eighteen archers were on the platform: the six who had scourged Jesus, the four who conducted him, two who held the cords attached to the cross, and six who were to crucify him. These were occupied

about the Saviour and the two thieves. They were small, robust men, of strange appearance—their hair stiff upon their heads, like wild beasts—who served the Romans and the Jews for money. The sight of all these men was more frightful to me, as I saw hideous figures of demons, who seemed to aid these cruel men; and horrible visions, under the form of toads, serpents, dragons, and venomous insects of all kinds, clouding the air. Some entered into the mouths and hearts of the assistants; others rested upon their shoulders, filling their souls with abominable thoughts, and their mouths with imprecations. I saw a glory surrounding Jesus, and angels weeping near him. I saw other compassionate angels consoling the holy Mother and the friends of Jesus. The archers stripped Jesus of his mantle and cincture, and tore violently from him his crown of thorns, that they might take off his Mother's seamless garment. He had then left only his short scapular of worsted, and a linen about his reins. The scapular was fastened to his

wounds, and inexpressible was the torture when they tore it from his breast. The Son of Man trembled, as he stood covered with his wounds, his shoulders and back torn to the very bone. The archers seated him upon a stone, and replaced the crown upon his head; they then again presented him a vase filled with gall and vinegar, but Jesus turned away his head in silence. Now they laid him upon the cross, and, having drawn his right arm upon the right arm of the cross, they tied it tightly. One of the archers placed his knee upon the sacred breast of Jesus; another held open his hand; whilst a third, with a hammer, drove through it a long, thick nail, fastening it to the cross. A clear, gentle groan came from the mouth of Jesus, and his blood spouted out upon the arms of his executioners. The nails with which they nailed him were very long, the heads flat, and of the size of a shilling, the thickest part of the nail being the size of a thumb, the point passing a little behind the cross. When his murderers had nailed the right hand of Jesus,

they perceived that the left did not quite reach the hole prepared for it. Fastening a cord to his left arm, they drew it with all their might, until the hand reached the hole. This violent dislocation of the arm gave him horrible suffering: his breast heaved, and his knees contracted towards his body. They again knelt upon him, tying the arm, and hammering the second nail into his left hand. The moans of Jesus were heard, mingled with the sounds of the hammer. The Virgin Mother felt all his torments; and stifled sobs could be heard now and then escaping from her. They had adjusted a piece of wood to the cross, to support the feet of Jesus, that the whole weight of his body might not rest upon the hands, and in order that the bones of the feet, when nailed, might not be broken. All the body of the Saviour had been drawn upwards by the violent tension of his arms. They stretched his knees, fastening them with cords; but finding the feet would not reach the piece of wood prepared for them, the archers were furious. Some of them wished

to make holes higher up, but it was difficult to place the piece of wood elsewhere; others overwhelmed their victim with imprecations. "He will not stretch himself," said they, "but we will help him to do it." Then they fastened the cords to his right leg, and drew it violently, until the foot reached the piece of wood. It was a horrible dislocation; and the breast of Jesus was heard to crack, as he cried, with a loud voice, "O my God! O my God!" They had tied his breast and his arms, that the hands might not be torn from the nails. It was frightful suffering. They then tied the left foot upon the right, piercing it first with a kind of auger, because it could not be so placed as to nail both feet together. This done, they took a nail, longer than those which pierced the hands, and hammered it through the foot into the piece of wood, into the cross. This was far more painful than all the rest, on account of the distension of the sacred body of Jesus. I counted thirty-six strokes of the hammer. The groans that pain forced from the sweet Saviour were

mingled with a continual prayer, filled up with passages of the Psalms and prophecies, whose predictions he was accomplishing: he had not ceased to pray all the way of the cross, and continued the same until his death.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE EXALTATION OF THE CROSS.

THE chief of the Roman soldiers had already attached Pilate's inscription to the top of the cross. It was about a quarter of an hour past mid-day, when Jesus was crucified; and at the moment the cross was raised, the temple resounded with the trumpet, celebrating the immolation of the Paschal Lamb. When his executioners had crucified Jesus, they fastened cords to the main part of the cross, and, raising it, they sunk it, with a dreadful shock, into the hole they had prepared for it. Jesus gave a cry of pain,—his wounds enlarged—his blood flowed abundant-

ly, and his dislocated bones struck each other. The archers, to steady the cross, shook it still more by fastening five stakes around it. Nothing could be more terrible, or more touching at the same time, than to see—amidst the insulting cries of the archers, of the populace, and of the Pharisees—in the distance, the cross totter an instant on its base, and plunge itself, trembling, into the earth. But there arose, also, towards it, holy and groaning voices,—those of Mary, John, and many of the pure of heart, who saluted, with sorrowing accents, the Word made flesh, elevated upon the cross. They raised their trembling hands, as if to help him; but when the cross, with a heavy sound, plunged into the hole of the rock, there was a moment of solemn silence. All earth seemed affected with a new sensation, before entirely unknown to it. Hell felt with terror the shock, and furiously redoubled its active agency against Jesus. The imprisoned souls in Limbo heard it with joy, full of hope: it was for them as the sound of the victor approaching the gates of redemption.

The holy cross was planted, for the first time, in the midst of the earth, as another tree of life in Paradise; and from the wounds of Jesus flowed four sacred streams to fertilize its soil, and to make it the Paradise of the new Adam. The terrible movement of the cross shook violently the thorn-crowned head of Jesus, causing it to bleed abundantly—his hands and feet, likewise. The archers placed their ladders against the cross, and untied the cords with which they had bound the body of Jesus, in order that the shock should not make it fall. The circulation of the blood having been impeded by the horizontal posture, and the pressure of the cords, rushed with impetuosity to his wounds, causing Jesus such an excess of suffering, that. sinking his head upon his breast, he remained for some moments as if dead. I felt myself plunged into a profound darkness, wherein I saw only my crucified Spouse upon the cross,—his face, with the terrible crown—the blood which filled his eyes—his mouth half open—his hair and beard clotted upon his breast—his bosom

torn—his shoulders, elbows, and wrists, extended to dislocation. The blood from his hands flowed down his arms; his breast heaved, leaving deep cavities below; his thighs and legs were dislocated like the arms; his limbs, his muscles, and his torn skin, had been so violently distended that all his bones could be counted. His body was covered with wounds, with gashes, and blue, black, and yellow spots; his blood, at first red, became pale and watery, and his sacred body livid and death-like. Some Sadducees, Pharisees, and Scribes, made the tour of the platform on horseback, and passing before Jesus, they disdainfully shook their heads, crying out, "Impostor, overthrow the temple now, and rebuild it in three days! He has said he can do this, and he cannot save himself! If thou art the Son of God and the King of Israel, come down from the cross, and we will believe in thee." The soldiers also mocked him. Jesus raised his head a little, and said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

CONTINUATION OF THE CRUCIFIXION, AND CONVERSION OF THE THIEF.

TOWARDS the sixth hour, there was a miraculous eclipse of the sun: the heavens were darkened, and the stars shone out, shedding a bloody light. A general terror seized upon men and beasts. Those who blasphemed Jesus lowered their tone, and several persons struck their breasts, saying, "May his blood be upon his murderers." Many, near and afar off, threw themselves upon their knees, imploring pardon; and Jesus, in the midst of his suffering, turned his eyes towards them. As the darkness increased, and the cross was abandoned, Dismas, the good thief, with an humble expression of hope, turned towards the Saviour, and said, "Lord, think of me when you will be in your kingdom!" Jesus replied, "Verily I say to you,

this day you shall be with me in Paradise." The holy Mother, Magdalene, Mary of Cleophas, and John, remained near the cross, keeping their eyes fixed upon Jesus. His Mother, with her devoted love, prayed interiorly that he would let her die with him. Jesus, looking at her with ineffable tenderness, turned his eyes towards John, and said to Mary, "Woman, behold thy son;" and to John, "Behold thy Mother." The holy Virgin was so overwhelmed with sorrow at these words, that she fell senseless in the arms of the holy women, who carried her to some distance from the cross. We need not be astonished that Jesus, addressing the holy Virgin, did not call her mother, but woman; as she appeared there as the woman by excellence—the woman who was to crush the serpent's head: this promise being in its very accomplishment, by the death of her Son. It was half after one o'clock, when the whole city was filled with trouble and disquietude. The streets were enveloped in a thick fog: men wandered, groping here and there: some

remained prostrate on the earth, striking their breasts; others, with lamentations, went upon the roofs of their houses, to look upon the heavens. The animals bellowed, and hid themselves; the birds flew, and then fell to earth: terror and agony were at their height. In the temple they were busied in immolating the paschal lamb, when darkness suddenly covered them. Trouble fell upon all, and cries of sorrow were heard everywhere. The priests tried to preserve order and tranquillity, but disorder only increased with the darkness. On Golgotha, the obscurity produced a fearful impression: cries and imprecations burst forth, succeeded by a solemn silence. Jesus recommended his Mother to John, and she was borne away. A calm reigned about the cross when all had left it. Jesus was absorbed in the profound feeling of coming death: he prayed to his heavenly Father, repeating passages of the Psalms, which were in their fulfilment. When the obscurity was at its height, and anxiety overwhelmed the minds of all, I saw Jesus alone,

without one to console him. He suffered all an afflicted man could suffer, filled with anguish, and deprived of all consolation, human or divine. Faith, hope, and charity—deprived of light, and of all sensible consolation—remained naked and alone in the desert of temptation; there sustaining themselves in the midst of infinite suffering. Inexpressible was this agony of Jesus. It was then that he obtained for us the strength to resist the extreme terror and desolation of death, when all the bonds which attach us to this world break asunder, and the feeling of another life is at the same time faint and obscure within us. We cannot come out victorious from such a trial, but by uniting our desolation to the merits of his desolation on the cross. Jesus then offered for us his misery—his suffering—his abandonment; so the soul united to Jesus in the bosom of the Church, in that great hour when all is obscure—when light and consolation disappear—has no longer to descend alone into the desert of the interior night, for Jesus has

thrown within it his own interior and exterior desolation, leaving the Christian no longer isolated there; for He who is the way, the light, and the truth, has descended to the tomb by this dark path, shedding benedictions on his way, and has planted there his cross, to soften its terrors. Jesus, abandoned, poor, and naked, offered himself for us to his eternal Father: with all the intensity of love, he made of his desolation itself a rich treasure. He offered, with his life, his labors, his sufferings, and the pangs caused by our ingratitude. He made his testament, giving all his merits to his Church and to sinners: no soul was forgotten, he remembered each one in his last agony! Jesus expressed his sufferings and desolation by a cry, permitting all the afflicted who acknowledge God for their Father, a resigned and filial expression of their sorrow to him. Towards the third hour, Jesus cried out, with a loud voice, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" When the loud cry of Jesus interrupted the profound silence that reigned

about the cross, the Pharisees turned towards him, saying, "He calls Elias." But when Mary heard the voice of her Son, nothing could keep her from returning to the foot of the cross, followed by John, Mary of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When the light returned, the body of the Saviour was seen, livid, exhausted, and whiter than before, on account of all the blood that he had lost. Jesus said, further (I do not know whether it was interiorly, or whether his mouth pronounced the words), "I am pressed as the grape, which is pressed here for the first time!" Jesus was fainting—his tongue was parched—and he said, "I thirst," adding some other words, the sense of which were, "My relatives also have forgotten me, not giving me to drink, in order that what has been foretold should be accomplished." The centurion, whose heart was already touched, dipping a sponge in vinegar, placed it at the end of his spear, and presented it to the mouth of Jesus.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE DEATH OF JESUS.

THE hour of the Lord was come. He combated with death, and a cold sweat burst forth from all his members. John remained at the foot of the cross, Magdalene, distracted with grief, leant behind it; the Holy Mother was supported by Salome and Mary of Cleophas. Her eyes were fixed upon her dying Son. Then Jesus said, "All is consummated!" and raising his head, he cried out with a loud voice, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit!"—it was a strong, sweet cry, penetrating heaven and earth,—and bowing his head, he gave up the ghost. I saw his soul, as a luminous form, enter the earth at the foot of the cross. John and the holy women fell prostrate with their faces on the ground. The centurion, Abenadar, had his eyes fixed upon the bloody countenance

of Jesus, and his emotion was profound. The earth trembled, and the rock split between the cross of Christ and that of the bad thief. The last cry of Jesus made all who heard it tremble, and even the earth acknowledged its Saviour. It transpierced the hearts of all who loved him as with a spear; and it was then that the heart of Abenadar was touched by grace. His heart, so proud and hard, broke against the rock of Calvary. He threw down his lance, struck his breast, and cried out in feeling accents, "Blessed be the all-powerful God—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the Just One. He is truly the Son of God." And having thus rendered homage to his Saviour, Abenadar would no longer remain in the service of his enemies, but joined the disciples of Jesus. Many others struck their breasts, and returned, weeping, to their homes. When Jesus commended his pure soul to his Father, and abandoned his body to death, this sacred body moved convulsively, then became of a livid whiteness, and the blood settled about his

wounds, making them more apparent, like dark spots. His countenance was drawn; his cheeks sunken; his nose became longer and more contracted; his eyes, full of blood, remained half open; his hands, at first contracted about the nails, relaxed, as well as his arms. Jesus raised his head an instant, with its thorny crown, and let it fall again under its weight of suffering; his livid lips, parted, showed his bloody tongue; his form extended along the cross, and stiffened, the whole weight of his body resting upon his feet; his knees sunk and bent upon one side, and his feet turned a little around the nails which transpierced them. Who could describe the sorrows of the Mother—this Queen of Martyrs. It was a little after three when Jesus expired. The light of the sun was yet veiled, and the air, during the earthquake, was heavy and stifling, but became fresher afterwards. Many of the spectators returned to Jerusalem, struck with terror. Cassius, the successor of Abenadar, with his soldiers, remained on Calvary. The friends of Jesus

surrounded the cross, seating themselves, and weeping. Silence and mourning reigned about the body of Jesus. At a distance in the valley, and on the opposite heights, some of the disciples were seen looking towards Calvary with anxiety, and then quickly disappearing for fear of exciting observation.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE EARTHQUAKE AND APPARITION OF THE DEAD AT JERUSALEM.

When Jesus died, I saw his soul in a luminous form enter the earth at the foot of the cross, and with it a brilliant troop of angels, among whom was Gabriel. These angels drove from the earth, into the abyss, a multitude of evil spirits. Jesus sent several souls from Limbo into their bodies again, that they might frighten the impenitent and render witness to him. The earthquake which split the rock of Calvary, caused great dam-

age, above all at Jerusalem, and in Palestine. Scarcely had the inhabitants regained courage at the return of light, when the frequent shocks of the earthquake, and the noise of the falling edifices, caused still greater panic. This terror was at its height, when those who fled in lamentations met upon their way the dead, who warned them and menaced them. In the temple the high priests had resumed the sacrifices which fear of the darkness had interrupted, and they were rejoicing in the return of light, when all of a sudden the earth shook—the noise of the crumbling walls, and of the veil of the temple, which rent in twain, struck the crowd with mute terror, occasionally interrupted by lamentable cries. In some parts of the temple the sacrifices continued quietly; in others order was preserved by the exertions of the priests; but at the apparition of the dead in the temple all fled, and the sacrifice was left as if the temple had been sullied. The two great columns, situated at the entrance of the sanctuary, and between which extended a magnificent curtain, with

drew from each other. The lintel which they supported relaxed, and the veil rent, with a fearful noise, from top to bottom, leaving the interior entirely exposed to view. The high priest, Zachary, killed between the altar and the temple, suddenly made his appearance in the sanctuary, menacing them with the death of the other Zachary—of John, and of the prophets in general. Two sons of the pious high priest, Simon the Just, showed themselves near the great chair, and spoke also of the death of the prophets, and of the sacrifice which was about to cease. Jeremiah appeared near the altar and proclaimed the end of the old sacrifice and the beginning of the new. Then a great noise was heard—the doors of the sanctuary flew open, and a voice cried out, "Let us depart hence." I saw angels go out. The resuscitated dead showed themselves everywhere, and wandered among the people. They entered into the houses of their descendants, rendering testimony to Jesus, and speaking severely against those who had taken part in his death. In the different

places where the death of Jesus had been proclaimed, they stopped a moment, and cried out, "Glory to Jesus, and vengeance upon his enemies." All trembled and fled, hiding themselves in the darkest corners of their dwellings. The dead re-entered their graves about the fourth hour.

CHAPTER XL.

JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA DEMANDS THE BODY OF JESUS—THE SIDE OF JESUS PIERCED WITH A LANCE—AND THE DEATH OF THE TWO THIEVES.

A little tranquillity was scarcely restored, when the great council of the Jews sent to Pilate, to beg that the limbs of the crucified might be broken, that they might not remain on the cross on the Sabbath-day; and Pilate gave orders to this effect. Soon afterwards, Joseph of Arimathea came to him, asking that he would give him the body of Jesus, the king of the Jews, that he might

bury it; for Joseph had agreed with Nicodemus to lay it in a new sepulchre which he had just made in his garden near Calvary. He found Pilate very much troubled, and he expressed much astonishment, that a man of his standing should so earnestly desire permission to render the last honors to one who had been so ignominiously crucified. Pilate sent for the centurion Abenadar, and asked him if the king of the Jews was already dead. Abenadar recounted to him the death of the Saviour, with his last words and last cry,—the earthquake, and the shock which split the rock of Calvary. Pilate only expressed some surprise that Jesus was so soon dead; but he was inwardly terrified at the coincidence of these signs with the death of Jesus, and wishing, perhaps, to make some amends for his cruelty, he granted the request of Joseph, and gave orders that the body should be delivered to him. Joseph of Arimathea, on quitting Pilate, made immediate preparation for embalming the sacred body of Jesus; and, purchasing aromatics,

and a new winding-sheet, he, accompanied by Nicodemus and his servants, who carried ladders, hammers, sponges, and vases filled with water, set out on their way to Calvary.

During this time, silence and mourning reigned on Golgotha. All were gone, but Mary, John, Magdalene, Mary of Cleophas, and Salome, who remained standing or sitting in front of the cross, their heads veiled, and weeping. Some soldiers lay here and there upon the ground, whilst Cassius, on horseback, rode from one side to the other. The heavens continued dark, and nature seemed to mourn. In a short time, six archers came with ladders, spades, cords, and heavy bars of iron, to break the limbs of the crucified. When they approached the cross, the friends of Jesus withdrew a little, and the sorrowful Mother trembled lest these savages should offer further outrage to the body of her Son. They applied their ladders to the cross, to satisfy themselves that Jesus was really dead; and finding the body cold and stiff, they left it, to ascend the

crosses of the thieves. Two archers broke their arms above and below the elbows, whilst a third broke their thighs and legs with clubs. Gesmas, on the left, gave horrible cries, and they finished him by three blows upon the breast. Dismas, the good thief, groaned and died. The archers loosed the cords which bound them, and their bodies fell to the earth; then, dragging them to a ditch between Calvary and the walls of the city, they buried them there. These wretches seemed yet to doubt of the death of Jesus; and the horrible manner in which they had broken the bones of the thieves, made the holy women tremble for the body of their Saviour, when the officer Cassius—a man of five-and-twenty, of weak and imperfect sight, but of ardent and active temperament—receiving a sudden inspiration, and excited by the ferocity of the archers, the agony of the holy women, and by the movement of divine grace, to accomplish a prophecy, seizing his lance and charging his horse towards the little elevation where the

cross stood, he stopped suddenly between the cross of Jesus and that of the good thief, and with his lance in both hands, he pierced the right side of Jesus with such force, that the point passed through his heart, protruding a little from the left breast: from the wound gushed forth a quantity of blood and water, which covered the face of Cassius as a river of grace and salvation. Cassius dismounted, threw himself on his knees, and striking his breast, loudly confessed Jesus. The holy Virgin and her companions, whose eyes were never turned away from their Lord, beheld with terror the movement of Cassius, and rushed with one cry towards the cross. Mary fell as if the lance had transpierced her own heart, whilst Cassius, upon his knees, blessed God; for the eyes of his body, as well as those of his soul, were healed and opened to the light. He remained plunged in profound contemplation, whilst many of the soldiers who witnessed this miracle fell upon their knees also and confessed Jesus The blood of the Saviour flowed as from a

crevice in the rock, and was gathered with unspeakable emotion by Mary and Magdalene, who mingled their tears with it. The archers had during this time received an order from Pilate not to touch the body of Jesus. They left Calvary, to return no more.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE BODY OF JESUS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS.

THE weather was yet dark and gloomy, when Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus reached Calvary. They found there Mary and the holy women, weeping in front of the cross. Cassius and some of the soldiers who were converted, remained at a little distance, timid and respectful. Joseph and Nicodemus recounted what they had done to save their Lord from an ignominious burial, and learnt from the centurion what had prevented the bones of Jesus from being broken, and

how the prophecy was accomplished by the lance of Cassius. As soon as the centurion Abenadar arrived, they began in sorrow and recollection the pious work of taking down the sacred body from the cross, and of embalming it. The holy Virgin and Magdalene were seated at the foot of the cross, on the right; the other women were occupied in preparing linen, sponges, vases of water, and spices: all were filled with emotions of sorrow and love, but silent and solemnly grave, —only here and there were heard stifled sobs and low groans. Magdalene, above all, gave herself up to her grief, and nothing could distract her from it. Joseph and Nicodemus, placing their ladders behind the cross, and mounting upon them, disengaged the nails from the sacred hands; Abenadar, with great difficulty, withdrew the large nail from his feet; Cassius received the nails, and gathering them together, placed them at the feet of the sorrowing Mother. Then placing the ladders in front of the cross, John and Nicodemus supported the body from above.

whilst the centurion, a little lower down, received the precious deposit in his arms, descending gently, and resting on each step, taking at every step precautions for its safety. The assistants kept their eyes riveted upon the body of Jesus, following every movement, and constantly raising their hands and eyes to heaven, with bitter weeping; yet the holy work proceeded in perfect calmness, and those who labored with the profoundest feeling rarely broke silence, except in an undertone, in some case of necessity. Whilst the strokes of the hammer resounded, Mary, Magdalene, and all those who had been present at the Crucifixion, had their hearts torn by the recollection of the sufferings of Jesus: they trembled lest they should hear again his penetrating cry of sorrow, and yet they mourned the silence of his divine mouth—too sure a proof of his death. When the body was taken down, they enveloped it from the waist to the knees, and laid it in the arms of his Mother, who held it in speechless sorrow. The holy

Virgin was seated upon the ground, her right knee a little raised, and her back supported by some mantles rolled together. They had disposed every thing in a way to facilitate as much as possible the melancholy duties that the exhausted Mother was to render to the body of her Son. The holy head of Jesus rested upon the knee of Mary, his body lay extended upon a sheet. The holy Virgin was overwhelmed with sorrow and love: she held for the last time in her arms the body of this well-beloved Son, to which she had been able to give no proof of love during his long martyrdom. She contemplated his wounds, covering with her kisses his bloody face; whilst Magdalene buried her face upon his feet. The men withdrew a little, to prepare the necessary materials for the embalming, whilst Cassius, with some converted soldiers, remained at a respectful distance; others again formed a guard, to prevent any interruption to the sad honors paid to Jesus. The holy women handed vases, sponges, linen, ointments, and aromatics, when required:

then again remained attentively waiting at some distance. Magdalene was always near the body of Jesus. John continually aided the holy Virgin, serving as messenger between the men and women, and helping sometimes one and sometimes the other. The blessed Mother preserved an admirable courage in her unspeakable sorrow. She could not leave the body of her beloved Son in the horrible state to which his sufferings had reduced him, and she began with an indefatigable activity to wash and efface the traces of the outrages it had received. She drew off with the tenderest precautions the crown of thorns—opening it behind, and cutting, one by one, those which were deeply sunk into the head of Jesus, that she might not by any movement enlarge the wounds: they placed the crown near the nails, Mary withdrawing the rest of the thorns which remained in the wounds with a kind of round pincers, showed them in mute sorrow to her friends.

The face of Jesus could be scarcely recog-

nized, it was so disfigured by the wounds which covered it. The beard and hair were matted with blood. Mary washed the head and face, and passed wet sponges over the hair, to moisten the dried blood. The more she washed, the plainer could be seen the horrible cruelties exercised towards Jesus. Each wound, as it became more apparent, exciting fresh tenderness and compassion. She washed the wounds of the head, the blood which filled the eyes, the nostrils, and the ears, with a sponge and piece of fine linen; she cleansed, in the same way, his partly opened mouth, his tongue, his teeth, and his lips. She divided what remained of his beautiful hair in three parts—one part she laid on each temple, the other on the back of his head, and as she untangled the front hair and smoothed it, she passed it behind his ears. When the head was washed, the holy Mother kissed it and veiled it. She then occupied herself with the neck, the shoulders, the breast, the back, the arms, and the torn hands. All the bones of the breast, all the joints

of the limbs, were dislocated, and could not bend. On the shoulder which had borne the weight of the cross, there was a frightful wound. All the main part of the body was covered with gashes, made by the lash, at the flagellation. Near the left breast was a small wound, where the point of the lance had protruded, and in the right side was a large one, where the lance of Cassius had entered, transpiercing the sacred heart of Jesus through and through. Mary washed all these wounds, and Magdalene, on her knees, helped her from time to time, but without quitting the feet of her Saviour, which she bathed with floods of tears, and wiped them with her hair. The beard, the breast, and the feet of the Saviour were washed. The body was of a bluish white, as if bloodless, and covered with brown spots: those parts were red where the skin and flesh had been torn off. She covered each wound, as she washed it, and embalmed it. The holy women, kneeling before her, presented in turn the boxes of precious ointment to fill and cover them.

She oiled the hair, and taking in her left hand the hands of Jesus, she kissed them, and filled the large holes made by the nails with ointment and aromatics. She filled, also, the ears, nostrils, and the wound of the side. Magdalene washed and embalmed the feet of her Saviour, often leaning down her face upon them, and watering them with her own tears. Then the holy Mother wrapped the head in linen, without covering the face. She closed the half opened eyes of Jesus, resting her hand for some time upon them; she closed also the mouth, and then embraced the precious body of her Son, letting her face fall upon his. Joseph and Nicodemus had been waiting some time, when John, approaching her respectfully, begged that she would permit them to finish the embalming of the body, as the Sabbath was near. Mary again embraced it, bidding it a most touching farewell. The men then raised Jesus from the bosom of his Mother upon the sheet on which he was laid, and carried it to some distance. Mary's sorrow, which for a short time had

been consoled by her pious work, again overwhelmed her, and she fell, her head veiled in the arms of the holy women. Magdelene rushed some steps forward, following those who would deprive her of her well-beloved Lord; but she returned to the side of the blessed Mother. Joseph and Nicodemus completed the holy work of embalming the body, and John brought it back to his mother. Mary knelt near the head of Jesus, placing under it a piece of fine linen, and, assisted by her companions, sprinkled from the shoulders to the face, aromatic herbs and scented powder, wrapping the linen firmly about the head and shoulders. Magdalene poured another bottle of balm into the wound of the side, and the holy women added other herbs to the hands and feet. Then the men, surrounding the whole of the sacred form of their Saviour with aromatics, crossed the stiff arms upon his breast, swathed it with a long piece of linen—as a child is swathed—from the head to the waist, and wrapped the body in a sheet. This

done, all knelt around Jesus to take a last farewell.

CHAPTER XLII.

JESUS LAID IN THE TOMB, AND GUARDS PLACED THERE.

THE men placed the body of Jesus upon a litter covered with brown cloth, recalling strongly to my mind the Ark of the Covenant; Nicodemus and Joseph, in front, supported it upon their shoulders, whilst Abenadar and John upheld it behind. The blessed Mother, Mary Magdalene, and Mary of Cleophas, with the other holy women, followed in procession. Two soldiers holding torches led the way, to light the cave which contained the sepulchre. They had walked thus about seven minutes, singing a sweet and solemn air, when the procession stopped at the entrance of the garden, and then, laying the body of Jesus on a board covered

with white linen, the men entered the grotto: this was newly excavated, and was clean and elegant within. The holy women seated themselves at its entrance; whilst the four men, after having placed within the sepulchre a sheet and aromatics, laid the body of Jesus in its tomb. They again gave vent to their love in tender expressions and embraces. On leaving the grotto, the holy Mother entered, and seating herself at the head of her divine Son, she rested her head long upon his face, and wept: when she left, Mary Magdalene rushed in. She had gathered fresh flowers, and threw them upon the precious body; clasping her hands and sobbing, she embraced the feet of her Saviour; but the men telling her it was time to close the tomb, she left it, and rejoined the sorrowing Mother. The foldings of the door were then closed, which were composed of two pieces of brown metal, forming, when clasped, a cross.

On Friday night I saw Caiphas and the principal Jews consulting together on the events which had taken place, and what

would be their probable effect on the people. Having ended this deliberation, they went in a body to Pilate's house, telling him, that as the Seducer had promised to rise again on the third day, the tomb should be well guarded, lest the disciples of Jesus should steal him away, and spread a report among the people of his resurrection,—so that the last deception would be worse than the first. Pilate would not meddle in the affair, saying, "You have a guard: do as you wish it to be done." He gave them, however, Cassius, who had promised to observe closely, and report all that might occur. I saw the guards, twelve in number, leave the city before sunrise—they were soldiers of the temple,—carrying lanterns at the end of their poles, to light the dark cave of the sepulchre, and enable them to see all who passed them on their way thither. As soon as they reached the grotto, and had satisfied themselves that Jesus was surely in the tomb, they fastened a cord along the outer gate, passing a second over the large stone which

was rolled against it, sealing it with a semi-circular seal. The guards were posted opposite the outer door,—five or six men, who relieved each other. Cassius was generally seated or standing before the entrance of the cavern, in a way to see the part of the tomb where the feet of Jesus lay. He had received great interior graces, which had transformed him into a new man: he passed the whole day in adoration and thanksgiving.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS, AND THE HOLY WOMEN AT THE SEPULCHRE.

I SAW a resplendent light between two angels clad in warlike array. It was the soul of Jesus, which, penetrating the rock, came to rejoin his most holy body, taking possession of it instantaneously. I saw the limbs move, and the body of the Saviour, united to his soul and divinity, disengage

itself from the winding-sheet. It was bril liant with glory. I soon saw Jesus rise and leave the tomb. The earth trembled, and an angel, as a warrior, darted like lightning from heaven into the cave, turning aside the stone and seating himself upon it. The guards had fallen as if struck by apoplexy, and lay senseless upon the earth. Cassius, seeing the brilliant light within the tomb, approached it and touched the empty linen. He had felt the earthquake—had seen the angel remove the stone—but he had not seen Jesus at the moment the angel entered the tomb, and the earth trembled. Jesus arisen, appeared to his Mother upon Mount Calvary. He was marvellously and radiantly beautiful—his garment seemed floating around him as a cloud of lightish blue—his wounds were large and luminous, and you might have passed a finger through those of the hands. The rays darting from these wounds seemed to reach the ends of his fingers. He showed them to his blessed Mother, and as she bent to the earth to kiss his feet, he took her by the hand,

raised her, and disappeared. The holy women knew nothing of the prodigies which had taken place at the sepulchre, and on their way thither they asked, with great anxiety, "Who will roll away the stone?" They wanted to pour nard and sweet-scented oil upon the body of Jesus, and to cover it with aromatics and odoriferous flowers, that they might honor him in his burial with every thing they considered most precious. I saw them approach the garden, but seeing the lanterns of the guards, and the soldiers prostrate on the ground, they were seized with fear, and turned aside towards Golgotha; but Magdalene, heedless of danger, hurriedly entered the garden, followed at a little distance by Salome. I saw Magdalene when near the guards, a little frightened, and return some steps towards Salome. Then together they passed through the soldiers extended on the ground, and entered within the grotto. They saw the stone rolled away, but the doors were closed. Magdalene opened them, anxiously looking within. She saw the linen in which

the body of Jesus had been wrapped upon the tomb. The great winding-sheet was in its place, containing nothing but aromatics. The swathing bands were there, and the linen which wrapped his sacred head lay in the place where his head had reposed. The tomb was resplendent, and an angel was seated on the right upon the stone. Magdalene was much troubled. I do not know whether she heard the words of the angels, but I saw her go out quickly from the garden, through the city, to where the apostles were assembled. In the mean time, the other holy women took courage and entered into the garden. At the entrance of the sepulchre they saw two angels arrayed in garments of dazzling white. The women, seized with fright, and shading their eyes with their hands, bent down to the ground. But one of the angels bid them not to fear, that they need not seek there the Crucified, for he was alive, and risen. He showed them the empty sepulchre, and ordered them to tell the disciples what they had seen and heard, and added that Jesus

would go before them into Galilee, and that they should remember what he had said to them: "That the Son of Man would be delivered into the hands of sinners—that they would crucify him, and that he would come to life upon the third day." The angels then disappeared. The holy women, trembling, but filled with joy, looked at the tomb, and, weeping, returned to the city. During this time I saw Magdalene reach the cenacle. She was like one distracted, and knocked loudly at the door. Some of the disciples were yet sleeping, others were discoursing together. Peter and John opened the door, and Magdalene telling them, hurriedly, that they had taken away the Lord, and she did not know where they had laid him, returned hastily to the garden. Peter and John followed, running after her, John always outstripping Peter. I saw Magdalene enter the garden and turn towards the grotto, overwhelmed with grief. She was wet with dew; the mantle had fallen from her shoulders, and her hair fell loosely about her. As she was alone, she

lid not dare, at first, to descend into the grotto, but kneeling a moment at the entrance, she looked through the partly opened door into the tomb, and as she threw back the long hair which covered her face, she saw two angels, seated one at each end of the sepulchre, and heard the voice of one saying to her, "Woman, why do you weep?" She cried out in sorrow (for her love saw but one object, had but one thought—that the body of Jesus was not there), "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." After these words, gazing again at the empty winding-sheet, she left the tomb, wandering here and there, with a confused presentiment that Jesus was near, and that she could find him. The apparition of the angels (whom she scarcely realized to be such) could not distract her from the one thought—"Jesus is not there: where is my Lord?" And turning from one side to the other, as if she had lost her way, as the day dawned, she saw suddenly before her, about ten paces from the tomb, a figure in white

behind a palm-tree, and as she ran towards it, she heard the words, "Woman, why weepest thou?" Believing him to be the gardener, and hearing him say, "Whom do you seek?" she instantly replied, "Sir, if it is you who have removed him, tell me where he is, that I may go and take him away." Then Jesus (for it was he) said to her, in his well-known voice, "Mary!" She knew it well; and forgetting the crucifixion, death, and burial, she rushed towards him, exclaiming, "Master!" She fell on her knees, extending her arms towards his feet; but Jesus stopped her with a look, and said to her, "Do not touch me, for I have not yet ascended towards my Father. Go, find the brethren, and tell them that I go to my Father and to their Father—to my God and to their God." He then disappeared.

I saw Magdalene, after the apparition, rise quickly, as in a dream, and run again to the sepulchre. There she saw the two angels still seated; and they repeated to her all they had said to the other women regarding the

resurrection of Jesus. Now, sure of the miracle, and of what she had seen, she hastened to find her companions, who were wandering here and there on the way to Golgotha, with a vague hope of somewhere meeting their Lord.

Magdalene had hardly left the garden when John entered it, and Peter an instant afterwards. John stopped a moment at the entrance of the grotto, bending to look down into the tomb, and saw the winding-sheet empty. Peter entered, and saw the linen wrappings folded and laid aside. They then believed in the resurrection, and in what Jesus had said to them, the Scriptures becoming clear,—for they had not understood them before. When Cassius and the guards had informed Pilate of the earthquake, and the wonderful rolling away of the stone, and the apparition of the angels, the Roman governor and the Pharisees combined, by force of menace and bribery, to spread the report among the people that the body of Jesus had been stolen away by night by his

disciples, whilst the guard were sleeping; thus certifying that Jesus was not the Son of God, and had not risen from the dead.

CONCLUSION.

ALL that Jesus has done for us in time, will bear eternal fruits; but we should cultivate and gather them here, or we cannot enjoy them in Eternity. The Church is the perfect Parent of a family; her year is a complete garden of all the eternal fruits in time: there is enough in one year for all who would gather them. Cursed is the idle and unfaithful gardener, who allows a grace to be lost which would have healed the sick, strengthened the weak, or fed the hungry, —for he must render an account of the smallest blade of grass at the day of judgment.

THE END.

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EMMERICH, CATHERINE

OR

he Sufferings of Jesus.

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BORROWER'S NAME

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